

COLONIAL MIMICRY AND MOCKERY:  
FILIPINIO-MUSLIM RELATIONS DURING THE EARLY AMERICAN  
COLONIAL PERIOD

A Thesis

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## ABSTRACT

Most scholarship on American colonialism in the Philippines has focused on the actions of the United States government and American policymakers in the archipelago. I argue in this thesis that there is a significant alternative narrative to American colonialism in the Philippines that highlights the agency of Filipino actors and how they dealt with the perceived challenges of the colonial experience, specifically regarding the newly integrated territories occupied by Muslim communities principally located in Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago. I focus on the early stages of American colonialism, defined roughly from 1900 to the 1920s, when American colonial policy was still in its formative stage and the inclusion of the Muslim areas into the nascent Filipino nation was not yet certain.

I consider three important challenges faced by Christian Filipino politicians because American administrators favored a form of rule of the Muslims communities in the southern islands of the archipelago that was distinct from the lowland, Christian-occupied regions. The first challenge I consider is how the Filipino political elite in the early 1900s articulated their desire for the inclusion of Muslim areas of the archipelago while at the same time asserting Christian civilizational superiority. Although Muslims were governed separately from the rest of the colony from 1900 to 1913, they formed a crucial part of the Filipino national imaginary and the Filipino elite considered Muslim occupied regions essential to nation state formation even at the very beginning of the American colonial period. By including the Muslim regions in studies of early American colonialism in the Philippines, we are able to better understand the agency of Christian Filipinos in the colonial process. The second

challenge to the Filipino elite concerned how they were to prove that they were capable of self-governance and autonomy, especially given the United States colonial mission of training Filipinos in democratic governance until they were ready to govern themselves. When Democrat President Wilson and his appointed governor-general for the Philippines, Francis Burton Harrison, put Filipinos in control of the colonial governance of Muslim occupied territories in 1916 following the passage of the Jones Law, Filipinos mimicked the United States' colonial policies and metrics in governing the Muslims to show their capability for autonomy. I argue that during this time period, Christian Filipino policies directed towards the Muslims were American in appearance and colonial in nature. The third challenge facing members of the Filipino elite was how to respond to Muslim resistance in Mindanao and American reservations that took this resistance as proof that Filipinos had not yet achieved the necessary level of "civilization" to govern themselves. The ways in which the Filipino elite responded both challenged and redefined the ideological motivation for American colonialism by highlighting American imperial interests in the resources of Mindanao and pointing to the contradictions embedded in US colonial policy.

By analyzing Christian Filipino responses to the often forgotten possibility that the Muslim-dominated regions of the Philippines could have been separated from the rest of the archipelago, we see the strategies used by Christian Filipinos to both comply with and rebel against the specious American doctrine of colonizing the Philippines to train Filipinos in democracy.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Joseph Stevens graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County in 2007, majoring in modern language and linguistics with a focus in Spanish and French and a minor in history before coming to study at Cornell University's Southeast Asia Program. His interest in Asian studies and the Philippines in particular stems from his background as the son of an American Air Force officer and his Filipina bride, his love for palm trees and tropical weather, and his interest in colonial history.

To my parents and best friends, without whose support none of this would have been possible.

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## CHAPTER 1

### TOWARDS A HISTORY FROM WITHIN

Benedict Anderson writes of the Philippines that:

Few countries give the observer a deeper feeling of historical vertigo than the Philippines. Seen from Asia, the armed uprising against Spanish rule in 1896, which triumphed temporarily with the establishment of an independent republic in 1898, makes it the visionary forerunner of all other anti-colonial movements in the region. Seen from Latin America, it is, with Cuba, the last of the Spanish imperial possessions to have thrown off the yoke, seventy-five years after the rest.<sup>1</sup>

Studying the Muslim regions of the predominantly Catholic Philippines seems only to add to this vertigo. Towards the dusk of Spanish rule in the late 1800s, these regions were located primarily in the southern islands of the archipelago, principally Mindanao and Sulu. Named *Moros* by the Spanish, Muslims in the Philippines were infamous in the islands as pirates, raiders, and slavers of unarmed (largely thanks to Spanish policies) lowland Christian regions. Finally forced into treaties with Spain due to defeats at the hands of the more technologically advanced Spanish navy, Muslim sultans entered a testy relationship with the Spanish crown that lasted until the intervention of the United States and the American purchase of the Philippine archipelago in 1898.

The Republican American colonial administration put in charge by President William McKinley then organized the Muslim regions as the Moro Province and the United States Army administered them separately from the rest of the archipelago until 1913. With the election of pro-Filipino independence, American Democrat

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<sup>1</sup> Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the World* (London; NY: Verso, 1998), 227.

Woodrow Wilson, the region would be incorporated into the rest of the Philippine civil government. Wilson's appointee, Governor-General William Harrison, took charge in 1916 of the "Filipinization" of the region, and Christian Filipinos, who so recently could have been forced into bondage at the hands of Muslim raiders, found themselves in positions of power over the Muslims who Filipino nationalists now deemed "brethren" and "brothers."

This study illuminates aspects of the relationships between the Christian Filipinos and Muslims in the archipelago during the early period of American colonialism, defined roughly from 1900 to the late 1920s, via Filipino nationalist responses to perceived threats that the Muslim regions of Mindanao could be split from the rest of the Philippines. This oft-forgotten historical possibility produced responses from the Filipino elite that are valuable to our understanding of the relationships within the archipelago as well as the growing tension between the Christian Filipino elite and their Muslim counterparts.

Research regarding this time period has been scarce and focuses primarily on the actions of the United States federal government and American policymakers in the archipelago. By focusing instead on the agency of Filipino actors and how they dealt with the perceived challenges of the colonial experience regarding the newly integrated territories occupied by Muslim communities, I show how nationalist, elite Filipinos responded to American colonialism and the ways in which they expressed their capacity for self-autonomy. From 1900 to the 1920s, American colonial policy was still in its formative stage and the inclusion of the Muslim areas into the nascent Filipino nation was not yet certain. Therefore, the stakes for nationalist leaders who

wanted the mapped boundaries of the Philippine archipelago to be preserved and to keep the rich natural resources that accompanied contested areas were high.<sup>2</sup>

The wealth in natural resources of the non-Christian and Muslim-occupied regions was fabled, and had significant influence on the desire of the Philippine political elite (and that of US politicians) for control of the non-Christian and Muslim occupied regions of Mindanao and Sulu despite the fact that neither the Filipinos nor the Americans was ever able to develop the regions to the potential cited by reports. Perhaps the most comprehensive overviews of the natural resources of the islands were done by the Philippine Bureau of Agriculture in 1922 and again in 1928.<sup>3</sup> P.J. Wester, who served as agricultural advisor in the Department of Mindanao and Sulu from 1917-1919, spearheaded the production of the report. Wester wrote that although “no complete geologic and soil survey has been made...it is evident to the casual traveler that it [Mindanao] is extremely rich in natural resources, capable of production of the great tropical staples of commerce on a very large scale.”<sup>4</sup> He comments that “climatically, Mindanao is more favorably situated than all the larger islands in the Archipelago to the north,” an unusual amount of land is available for

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<sup>2</sup> Maps drawn up by Spanish missionaries at the end of the 1800s included the non-Christian and Muslim dominated regions as part of the colony despite the fact that Spanish control of these areas varied widely. See *Mapa de las razas de Filipinas 1899* in U.S. Treasury Department, U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, *Atlas of the Philippine Islands* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1900), also reproduced in the appendix. Although the map was published for the U.S. treasury department, it was drawn up by Spanish Jesuit missionaries using sketches, drawings, and calculations prior to US arrival. For more regarding the role of mapping in the envisioning and formation of the nation-state, see Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994). Thongchai’s contribution helped inspire Benedict Anderson to add an additional chapter, titled “Census, Map, Museum,” to his seminal work. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 2006), 167.

<sup>3</sup> See P.J. Wester, *Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago: Their Natural Resources and Opportunities for Development* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1928). This is the updated edition of the original 1922 release.

<sup>4</sup> Wester, 11.

agricultural purposes and that the soil is “virgin and exceedingly fertile. Practically every tropical crop can be grown there.”<sup>5</sup> The rivers and waters “abound in fish,” and the numerous falls and rapids “could furnish abundant power for industrial and transportation purposes and for irrigation.”<sup>6</sup> He concluded his overview of the resources of Mindanao and Sulu by stating that:

It has been said that the Philippines is the richest undeveloped region on earth today. A broad statement. That it stands in front rank is unquestioned, however. As the second largest island in the Archipelago and *well known to possess greater natural advantages than any of the others*, therefore, the development of Mindanao presents a fascinating subject to the student of economics, and an unusual opportunity for constructive statesmanship.

The perceived economic potential of these regions on the part of the Filipino political elite no doubt heightened the stakes for their retention of control of the Muslim regions.

I have chosen to focus specifically on the Manila-based Christian Filipino elite given their positions of power and education and the ample evidence of their views of the Muslims and Muslim-occupied regions expressed in their written works, published speeches, and addresses to the United States Congress and Presidency. They were members of the Philippine Commission and in the American established colonial government. This study, therefore, can make limited suggestions regarding the opinions of the majority of the Filipino Christian masses towards the Muslim tribes of Mindanao and Sulu, but focuses instead on the articulation of Filipinos in power regarding their Muslim counterparts and the various ways that they, in essence, used

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 13.

the Muslim populations to achieve their own objectives and political ends.<sup>7</sup> By looking at the often forgotten historical possibility that the Muslim dominated regions of the Mindanao and Sulu may have been separated from the rest of the Philippines and how Filipinos responded, we are able to learn more about the Christian Filipino investment in the regions, be they emotional, economic, or nationalist than we learn about the viewpoints of the Muslims. To do justice to the Muslim voices regarding this time period and what they wanted politically, economically, and socially, would require a different set of sources as well as the fluency in the local languages of the Muslim regions to access them.<sup>8</sup>

The focus on the Christian Filipino elite in this study, however, is justified by the fact that they were in positions of power to shape the discourse related to the Muslims, and would eventually occupy posts in the colonial government of Muslim

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<sup>7</sup> I mention this distinction because the stakes for the Filipino, lowland Christian masses and the elite differed. Understanding popular notions about Muslims among a wider Christian Filipino audience may shed more light on the relationship between them in the archipelago, especially considering that how Christian Filipinos felt regarding self-autonomy and independence varied greatly depending on class. See Reynaldo Clemeña Iletto, *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840-1910* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1997), 16. Iletto gives one account of a “history from below” by using as source material the *Payson Pilapil*, considered the most pervasive epic poem based on the life of Jesus Christ on the Tagalog village level. Iletto argues that the *pasyon* contains a subversive element that empowered the masses by making available “a language for venting the ill feelings against oppressive friars, principales, and agents of the state” (16). Iletto then shows how the language of the *pasyon* and the ideals derived from both it and other forms of popular expression would later appear repeatedly in popular movements and revolutions among the masses. He argues that the masses’ notion of *kalayaan* (freedom) in popular uprisings and revolutions from 1890 to 1910 differed from the visions of independence that preoccupied the *ilustrados* and the elite of Tagalog society. The lower masses expected that after years of war between Americans and Filipinos, “society would be turned on its head...all men would be brothers, leaders would be Christ-like, all forms of oppression would end and property would be shared; in other words, when their image of *kalayaan* would turn into a lived experience” (207). Members of the elite, however, “yearned for autonomy in the context of the stable society of the past in which they were the ‘natural’ leaders” (207).

<sup>8</sup> For more about the Muslims in the Philippines, see Cesar Adib Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines* (Quezon City: Asian Center, University of the Philippines Press, 1973), Thomas McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). Primary sources can also be found at the Library of Congress and the National Archives in Washington, DC, but are in local languages, primarily Tausug.

dominated regions. They also had the most to gain from the Muslim territories. Finally, looking at elite Christian Filipino articulations of difference between themselves and Muslims helps us understand how the nascent nation was forming. While the responses on the part of the Filipino elite regarding the role of Mindanao and the Muslim communities in the Philippines were not monolithic, sources show that they were invested in the future of region even at the very beginning of American colonialism when Muslim regions, organized as the Moro Province, were governed by the US Army as opposed to the civil administration put in place to govern the Christian regions of the archipelago.

American colonists viewed themselves as the “trustees” of inferior races in the archipelago, races that through training could be taught the “American” values of democracy and liberty. They did not, however, perceive the races as being at equal stages on the scale of civilization. Due to their contact with the West through colonization by Spain, Filipinos were deemed higher on this scale while the “wild people,” namely the Muslims and the non-Christian tribes, were perceived as even less civilized. Although contact with Spain advanced the Filipinos on the civilizational scale, Spanish influence was also deemed to be polluting. Prominent Americans, like Philippine Commission member Dean C. Worcester, felt that the Muslims would make better colonial subjects given that they were free of the corrupting influence of the *mestizo* elite and of the Spanish Catholic friars.<sup>9</sup> I argue in Chapter 1 that Filipinos needed to prove that they were capable of administering their Muslim counterparts by

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<sup>9</sup> See Dean C. Worcester, *The Philippines Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1914), chapters 20-25. As quoted in Vicente Rafael, *White Love, and other Events in Filipino History* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2000), 47.



asserting civilizational difference while at the same time highlighting racial similarities in order to keep the archipelago together.

I also argue that the Christian Filipino elite defined what it meant to be Filipino against the Muslims and other minority groups under American control. I contend that this response was preconfigured by recognition of superior American military might and acceptance of American colonial ideology. Thus, defining the nation in contrast to American rule was precluded by the necessity to cooperate with the regime and prove their own civilized state. By focusing on the actions of the Christian Filipino elite and their relationships with the Muslims, I hope to fill a gap in current scholarship.

Historian Glenn Anthony May, for example, concentrated on American colonial education policy in the Christian regions of the islands, concluding that American efforts at “social engineering,” or as he defines it, the molding and restructuring of a society, failed in the Philippines as the United States did not accomplish either its short term or long term goals in the colony.<sup>10</sup> He focuses specifically on the years 1900 to 1913 and deliberately excludes the Muslim regions as they were governed separately from the Christian regions of the colony during this time period. I argue that although they were governed separately, the Muslim regions of the Philippines played a critical role in early Philippine state formation and were an integral part of the Filipino national imaginary.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Glenn Anthony May, *Social Engineering in the Philippines: the Aims, Execution, and Impact of American Colonial Policy, 1900-1913* (London: Greenwood Press, 1980).

<sup>11</sup> In a separate chapter (chapter 2), I expand upon May’s thesis by including the pro-independence American Democratic administration of the Philippines rather than focusing solely on the Republican period when looking at social engineering.

Just as May excludes the Muslims and focuses more on American policymakers in the archipelago, so too does Peter Gowing elide the role that Christian Filipinos played in the early years of the formation of the nascent nation-state in *Mandate in Moroland: The American Government of Muslim Filipinos, 1899 to 1920*.<sup>12</sup> Gowing argues that Americans failed to accomplish their mandate (or “social engineering,” in May’s terminology) in Moroland just as May argues that they failed to do so in the Christian regions. Gowing defines this mandate as raising the Muslims to the political and educational level necessary to govern themselves in a modern world. He attributes its failure to the short duration of American colonialism in the region and the decision on the part of American Democratic Governor-general Francis Burton Harrison to Filipinize the colonial government, and so too blames the Christian Filipinos.<sup>13</sup>

Julian Go has characterized the Filipino reception of US democratic tutelage as a tactic irreducible to “resistance” that he dubs “domestication,” a process by which Filipinos applied existing local political ideologies and values to the unknown ones coming from the Americans, thus harnessing American ideologies according to preexisting local practical schemas and discursive categories.<sup>14</sup> In essence, Go states that the preexisting ideology used was largely that articulated by Malolos politician Apolinario Mabini, whose logic of government was premised on the idea of “mutual exchange” between a governing class and the popular masses. The “governing class”

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<sup>12</sup> Peter Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland: The American Government of Muslim Filipinos, 1899-1920* (Quezon City: Philippine Center for Advanced Studies, University of the Philippines System, 1977), 336-344.

<sup>13</sup> Gowing, 336-344.

<sup>14</sup> Julian Go, “Colonial Reception and Cultural Reproduction: Filipino Elites and United States Tutelary Rule,” *The Journal of Historical Sociology*, 12, no. 4, 1999.

was led by *razón* and the popular masses would obey them not out of any fear of retribution or presumed despotism, but rather because it was in the masses' interests to do so, in order to benefit from this exchange. He too focuses on the Manila-based Christian Filipino.

All three works, however, seem to miss the importance of the rhetoric among Christian Filipino politicians regarding the Muslims of the south, and the role that this would play in the politicization of Muslim identity and the future problems that this would cause. This politicization has been noted in John D. Harbor's Master's thesis, "Conflict and Compromise in the Southern Philippines: the Case of Moro Identity."<sup>15</sup> Harbor points to the historical politicization of Moro identity combined with the centralization processes of President Ferdinand Marcos as being the main catalyst for igniting violence in the region, rather than religious or ethnic intolerance or difference. He, however, glosses over the relationships between the Christian Filipinos and Muslims and the internal colonization of the islands that took place under Christian Filipino rule during American democrat Governor-general Harrison's political tenure. Failure to understand the historical origins of the Christian-Muslim relationship leads Harbor to conclude that "the decentralization policies of the Ramos administration (1992-1998) and the compromise between his administration and the Moro National Liberation Front (the dominant Muslim faction) may have finally resolved the conflict."<sup>16</sup> Violence in the region, however, persisted well after the publication of

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<sup>15</sup> John D. Harbor, "Conflict and Compromise in the Southern Philippines: the Case of Moro Identity" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 1998).

<sup>16</sup> For an alternative and better documented viewpoint of the development of Filipino Muslims that identified with a grouping based on their religious commonality, see Thomas McKenna, *Muslim Rulers*

Harbor's thesis and will most likely continue in the future—making it all the more pressing to understand the history of the Muslim-Christian Filipino relationship.

While political scientist Patricio Abinales gives more attention to this issue than Harbor, he collapses the interests and stakes of Filipino Christian politicians and their American rulers.<sup>17</sup> While there no doubt existed alliances between these two groups, elite Filipinos of the era mention continuously their relative fitness to rule over the Muslim dominated regions compared to the Americans. Through their role in the colonial infrastructure of Mindanao, they needed to prove their capacity to rule themselves. A focus on Filipino responses to the perceived threat of losing Mindanao, highlights their perception that these regions were crucial to the nation and reveals how they used these regions in their quest for independence, a tactic currently missing from the Philippine historical record.

Chapter three will go into detail regarding the Filipino takeover of government posts in the Muslim regions, which is key to understanding the outsider status of Muslims in the Philippines and which has lasting effects today. When Democrat President Wilson and his appointed governor-general for the Philippines, Francis Burton Harrison, put Filipinos in control of the colonial governance of Muslim occupied territories in 1916, Filipinos mimicked the United States' colonial policies and metrics in governing the Muslims to show their capability for self-governance. I argue that during this time period, Christian Filipino policies directed towards the Muslims were American in appearance and colonial in nature.

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*and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

<sup>17</sup> See Patricio Abinales, *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the Formation of the Nation-State* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2000), 34-40, 55-60.

Although colonial mimicry has been described in the work of several writers, few have mentioned the type of semi-imperial mimicry that I discuss. In “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse,” Homi Bhabha describes how the post-Enlightenment, English imperial order imposed on the colonized an imitative identity that was flawed--almost, but not quite, that of the colonizers, or “almost but not white.”<sup>18</sup> This mimicry is also a menace to the colonial order, which Bhabha locates in mimicry’s “double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority.”<sup>19</sup> He develops his thesis further in “Signs taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree Outside Delhi, May 1817,”<sup>20</sup> stating that “mimicry marks those moments of civil disobedience within the discipline of civility: signs of spectacular resistance.” His theories about colonial mimicry, however, fall short of describing the semi-imperial behavior of the Filipino elite who, I argue, mimicked American colonial policies and metrics not out of resistance, but rather in order to prove their own capacity for autonomy by demonstrating that they too could colonize, “civilize,” and establish order in a population considered less civilized than themselves (i.e. the Muslims). In this light, mimicry of the American colonial regime by Christian Filipinos in relation to their Muslim counterparts was a calculated move on the part of the elite that complied with what was viewed as acceptable by the American regime (rather than alternatives such as armed resistance) and therefore legitimized actions Americans took regarding the Christian Filipinos.

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<sup>18</sup> Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 127.

<sup>19</sup> Bhabha, *Location*, 129.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 162.

Just as the elite legitimized American imperial behavior, however, so too did they challenge it. Chapter four will discuss how members of the Filipino elite responded to Muslim resistance in Mindanao and American reservations that took this resistance as proof that Filipinos had not yet achieved the necessary level of “civilization” to govern themselves. The various ways in which the elite responded both challenged and redefined the ideological motivation for American colonialism. The elite mocked American “lessons” by subverting American ideology in justifying why they were fit for self-government.

Chapter five concludes the thesis and shows how understanding elite Christian and Muslim relations in the archipelago during the early stage of American colonialism allows us a fuller picture of how Philippine nation-state formation took place.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE CIVILIZATIONAL CONTEST

#### *Introduction*

To bring to a close this part of our study, let us charge ourselves with an idea several times enunciated...to control Mindanao...which consists in organizing a government that shall comprise the group of islands in the south...separate from the rest of the colony and dependent on the Governor General solely in regard to the definite solution of grave subjects of general interest to the country.

We believe that we must not only do this but, on the contrary, it is absolutely indispensable....

Don Julian Gonzales Parrado, General of Brigade of the Spanish army in Mindanao, wrote the above passage in his memoirs concerning Mindanao in 1893.<sup>1</sup> Recognizing the cultural distinctiveness of the ethnolinguistic groups of the Mindanao region, he called for its separation from the rest of the colony, noting the failure of his army to establish anything more than a tenuous hold of the region as well as that of the Jesuit priests to convert the local Muslim population and collect taxes and tribute for the state.<sup>2</sup> He writes that they held “very little or no jurisdiction in the interior” of Mindanao and that “our military attitude before the immense majority of the Muslims is purely defensive in lines of resistance intended to restrain by force their aggressions and misconduct.”<sup>3</sup> His primary motivation for separating Mindanao was not just ideological, but economic and logistical. If a civil government similar to the one in other parts of the archipelago was established in Mindanao, Parrado believed that there

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<sup>1</sup> “Memoria concerning Mindanao,” 1893, Edward Bowditch Papers, Cornell University, Box 1.

<sup>2</sup> The region of Mindanao that I refer to here corresponds with the island itself, as well as the Sulu archipelago, the Calamianes, and Paragua (now known as Palawan).

<sup>3</sup> “Memoria concerning Mindanao,” 1893, Edward Bowditch Papers, Cornell University, Box 1.

would be grave abuse, including negligent handling of finances by Spanish officials, corruption, and the rise of aggression and alienation among the Muslims themselves as a result. He thus argued for a purely military administration of the island, a venture he hoped would also end the piracy of rich coastal Visayan regions by the Muslims.

His call for the separation of the southern islands and purely military administration would find their echo in United States army reports dating from the early 1900s. In fact, Sulu and the island of Mindanao were classified as special regions of the newly purchased colony of the Philippines and were put under direct control of the army.<sup>4</sup> U.S. Army officials recognized that a military government would be needed to maintain peace and stability. They also largely considered the Muslim groups of the south, which included the Sulu, Malanao, Samal, and Matabanganan, as inferior to their Christian, lowland counterparts.

Consider statements by Najeeb M. Saleeby, whose many roles in the colonial state included serving as assistant chief of the Bureau of Non-Christian tribes, superintendent of schools in the Moro Province, and as a member of the Legislative Council of the Moro Province. He wrote in 1913 that:

A wide and deep chasm separates the Moros from their Christian neighbors. Marked inequality in culture and radical differences of civilization make it impossible to govern them alike. Two forms of government are at present necessary, one for the Moro and one for the Christian. The Moro has to develop, reform, and rise to the level of the Christian before the two governments can be united or incorporated.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See *Mapa Etnográfico de Filipinas*, in U.S. Treasury Department, U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, *Atlas of the Philippine Islands* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1900), located in the appendix. The dark green regions approximate the areas that became part of the Moro Province. Note that Paragua is now known as Palawan.

<sup>5</sup> Najeeb M. Saleeby, *The Moro Problem: An Academic Discussion of the History of the Solution of the Problem of the Government of the Moros of the Philippine Islands* (Manila: E.C. McCullough & Co., 1913), 16. Although Saleeby advocated different administrations for the Moro and Christian Filipinos, he believed in integrating the Moros into the Filipino polity.



The Filipino Christian elite at this time had already embraced a western influenced democracy in the form of the Malolos Republic, which was proclaimed on January 23, 1899, by President Emilio Aguinaldo.<sup>6</sup> Governance for the various tribes in the Moro province at the turn of the century, however, still relied on *datu*s and local strongmen, although the degree of institutionalization varied widely among them.<sup>7</sup> American officials ranked the Muslims low on the scale of civilization, and the difference in traditions and governance led both Muslim leaders and American officers in 1908 to echo the call made earlier by Spanish colonial officials for the separation of Mindanao from the rest of the colony.<sup>8</sup>

The received narrative characterizes the relationship between Moro leaders and Manila politicians as one of varying degrees of resistance and political accommodation, and seems to de-emphasize the responses made by Filipino political leaders to army officials' calls for the Moro province's separation. This chapter will highlight these responses and add nuance to the relationship between Philippine metropole and periphery by showing how leaders of the nascent Philippine state, such as Trinidad Pardo H. de Tavera, Sergio Osmeña, and Camilo Osias, depended on the Muslim and non-Christian minority groups in their quest to prove that they were in fact civilized enough to be granted autonomy and control of the state while at the same

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<sup>6</sup> On February 5, 1899, a mere two weeks after the formation of the Malolos Republic, Aguinaldo authored a manifestation declaring war against the United States. The US put down what it called the Philippine Insurrection, and President Theodore Roosevelt declared the end of the hostilities in July 1902, although sporadic acts of guerilla warfare persisted.

<sup>7</sup> The most institutionalized forms of Islamic government seemed to be those of Sulu and Maguindanao while more recently Islamized tribal groups, such as the Samal, still had a relatively informal level of governance organized around the *datu*.

<sup>8</sup> Patricio N. Abinales and Donna J. Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines*, (New York: Roman and Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 124.

time asserting that the Moro Province should not be separated from the rest of the Christian dominated archipelago. This burden of proof is significant in that President William McKinley, upon acquiring the Philippines, adopted a policy of “benevolent assimilation,” promising that the United States would train Filipinos in democratic governance until they were ready to govern themselves.<sup>9</sup>

Contrasts with the Muslims and non-Christian tribes had already given the Filipinos some cultural capital with certain American colonists who recognized their supposed cultural superiority. The Muslims would prove a convenient “other” against which Christian leaders could define what being Filipino meant while at the same time being careful to highlight commonalities to prevent the separation of the province and validate Filipino ambitions to administer the Muslim (and non-Christian) regions of Mindanao that had historically been hostile to Christian control. Filipino intellectuals could not use the United States as the outsider to define the nascent nation since the path to independence was perceived to lie more in convincing the US that Filipinos were civilized. Once Christian Filipinos were put in control, the progress of Mindanao’s Muslims was touted as a measure of the capability of Christian Filipinos in state administration. When the Democrats gained control of the U.S. Presidency and Congress in 1913, the colonial infrastructure in the Moro Province would be Filipinized and Mindanao was treated more like a colony of the central state rather than a participating province. It would become a site used by Christian Filipinos to alleviate land shortage, make new alliances and attract new followers, thus

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<sup>9</sup> Writers of Post-9/11 terrorism literature have pointed out similarities between this policy and the official rhetoric concerning the establishment of democracy in Iraq.

consolidating their political power. Muslims and non-Christians in the islands remained outsiders in the process.<sup>10</sup>

The separation that this study makes among *Filipino*, *Muslim*, and *non-Christian* ethnoreligious categories is a deliberate move justified by the historical context of the time period. At the turn of the century, Filipino did not denote the entire peoples of the archipelago. The Census of 1903 characterized the society of the archipelago as “a collection of many tribes speaking different languages” and declared that the term *Filipino* should be “properly applicable to the Christian peoples only.”<sup>11</sup> It thus helped consolidate self-identification as Filipino by grouping together previous census categories such as “Spanish-Filipino” and “Chinese-Filipino” while at the same time clearly denoting the outsiders: namely, the Muslims (called Moros, the Spanish term for Muslim Filipinos, by American officials), the non-Christian tribes, and the ethnic Chinese. The meaning of Filipino, however, would shift over time to allow a degree of inclusion to these outsiders. The term “non-Christian tribes” is especially tricky—I have treated them as a separate category as most colonial records seem to use the term to refer to those that were not only non-Christian but also non-Muslim; they practiced forms of animism considered more primitive than the other two religious traditions. However, use of the term to refer to the Muslims did take place.

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<sup>10</sup> For more about Muslim resistance and responses, see Chapter 4. As a more exhaustive analysis of the viewpoints of Muslims would require a different set of sources than the one used in my study, see also McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels*.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel F. Doeppers, “Evidence from the Grave: The Changing Social Composition of the Populations of Metropolitan Manila and Molo, Iloilo, during the Late Nineteenth Century,” in *Population and History: The Demographic Origins of the Modern Philippines*, ed. Daniel F. Doeppers and Peter Xenos (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1998), 266.

When this is the case, it will be specified.<sup>12</sup> Other writers have aptly explored the power of the census in the creation and reification of ethnic and religious categories.<sup>13</sup> The extent to which inhabitants of the Philippines identified themselves with certain labels and the ways in which these categories of self-identification changed are significant to this period in Philippine history, and remain understudied. This chapter will re-examine the role of the Muslims in the development of the nascent nation-state, arguing that even at the state's very inception under American colonial rule, the Muslim tribes played a critical role in helping political leaders define a national Filipino character and fortify their power. In a larger sense, it seeks to foreground the different ways that leaders of a weak state can use the periphery in the construction of the nation and in achieving their own political ends.

### ***Historical Background***

The historical context of American state building in the Philippines from 1900 to 1935 is useful in understanding the development of the Philippine political system, the perceived conditions for and challenges to Philippine independence, and the conditions that produced the competing political ends of nationalist politicians.<sup>14</sup> It is significant that American colonial state building in the Christian Philippines differed from that in the Moro and non-Christian provinces.

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<sup>12</sup> The non-Christian tribes deserve serious attention by scholars of Filipino colonial development and they too served as useful outsiders to Filipino nationalists in their quest to define a national character. However, time constraints limit coverage of non-Christian, non-Muslim groups in this study.

<sup>13</sup> See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London; New York: Verso, 2006), chapter 8, titled "Census, Map, Museum." See also Vicente Rafael, *White Love, and Other Events in Filipino History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), for his discussion on the census in the beginning chapters.

<sup>14</sup> Much of this context has been taken from Abinales and Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines*, chapters 5 and 6.

In the Christian regions, which included all of the lowland provinces in Luzon and the Visayas, the United States established a professional civil service, promulgated a system of public education, and formed and trained a Philippine constabulary to keep the peace. Although warfare and resistance from Filipino insurgents who fought for the recently minted and short-lived Malolos Republic continued, colonial state-building in pacified areas coincided with the fighting.<sup>15</sup> Executive positions in the agencies aforementioned were limited to Americans, although Filipinos occupied lower level positions. In 1906, the civil service contained roughly 2500 Americans, 4600 Filipinos and 1500 Spaniards. Education involved a much greater percentage of Filipinos as the expansion of English education outstripped the supply of American teachers, who in 1902, numbered only 926 compared to over three thousand Filipino teachers. Filipinos also participated in the constabulary, with some even becoming junior officers.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to these institutional pillars, colonial officials set up municipal governments. Elections commenced in pacified areas of the colony as early as December 1901 with the first polls for municipal officials in February 1902. As of mid-1903, over 1000 municipal governments and 31 provincial governments had been created. In 1907, elections took place for representatives to the Philippine Assembly, a government body intended by the United States colonial government to be a training ground in democracy for Filipinos to take a hand in the affairs of the colony and gain political experience. President McKinley's instructions to the Philippine Commission

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<sup>15</sup> Fighting was fiercest between 1899 and 1902, and sporadic incidences of guerilla warfare persisted as late as 1906.

<sup>16</sup> Onofre D. Corpuz, *Bureaucracy in the Philippines* (Manila: University of the Philippines, 1957), 169, 183 (table 5), 195, as quoted in Abinales and Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines*, 120.

in 1900 were that “the distribution of powers...is always to be in favor of the smaller subdivision.”<sup>17</sup> This construction of government from the local level up is significant in the development of Philippine politics; indeed, as Amoroso and Abinales writes, to win a local, provincial, or assembly seat, “an aspirant first deployed his local network of family, friends, and business associates.”<sup>18</sup> Filipino political aspirants also sought patronage from American officials who had valuable connections and could introduce the Filipino aspirants to other elites with powerful local networks.

Filipinos in the early 1900s were thus given a multitude of ways to participate in the nascent state—they could become staff members in the civil service, teachers in the Department of Education, officers in the constabulary, municipal administrators and leaders, provincial governors, and representatives to the Philippine assembly. This early induction into the political arena gave Filipino politicians a leg up in comparison to their Moro counterparts for they had more time to forge political alliances and power blocs.

Governed directly by the US army from 1900 to 1913, Muslims were given fewer chances to participate in the nascent state. American colonial officials considered them at least two generations away from democracy.<sup>19</sup> Although *datus* often served as brokers of the colonial regime and acted as tribal ward leaders to collect taxes and police their own domains, Muslim political participation outside of these roles was limited.

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<sup>17</sup> U.S. War Department, *Instructions to the Taft Commission through the Secretary of War*, William H. McKinley (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900).

<sup>18</sup> Abinales and Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines*, 135.

<sup>19</sup> See Najeeb M. Saleeby, *The Moro Problem*, 5.

Army rule of the southern provinces was largely successful at establishing peace between the previous warring Muslim groups and fostering trade and economic growth. Due to the growth in exports as a result of the nascent hemp, rubber, and timber industries as well as the establishment of special markets that allowed Muslims to trade directly with port cities in Southeast Asia without interference from Chinese and Filipino middlemen, the Moro Province became “completely dependent upon its own revenues” by 1913.<sup>20</sup> Its attraction to Filipino politicians grew with its commercial success.

### ***Defining a Filipino Nation using a Muslim Foil***

Americans in the Philippine archipelago considered the Christian Filipinos more civilized than their Muslim counterparts from the very beginning of the American occupation in 1899. This perception among Americans can be attributed to the closer relationship that Filipinos had to the Spanish colonial state, Western style education (among the elite), and adoption of Christianity. Filipino leaders in the early 1900s took advantage of this concession in a number of ways. They defined a national Filipino character in contrast to the Muslims of the southern islands and posited that the American goal of eventual autonomy of the archipelago required that the Filipinos civilize their Muslim counterparts so that the Muslim communities of the south would look at their Christian neighbors as brethren. “Civilizing” the Muslims also served the purpose of showing that not only were Filipinos ready for autonomy but that they too were capable of civilizing and teaching other peoples the ways of democracy.

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<sup>20</sup> Patricio N. Abinales, *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the Formation of the Philippine Nation-State* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila, 2000), 21.

Perhaps the most striking example of the use of the Muslim communities to define a national character comes from one of the first Filipino members of the Philippine Commission, Trinidad Pardo H. de Tavera. Tavera was born on April 13, 1857, and was a prime example of an elite Filipino ilustrado. A creole, he resided in Intramuros, Manila, and went to the best schools in the colony, receiving his bachelor's degree from the Colegio de San Juan of the Ateneo Municipal. He would follow his uncle to France where he took up medical studies and received his Doctor of Medicine from the Sorbonne.<sup>21</sup> He came back to the Philippines in 1887 on a royal commission to study Philippine medicinal plants, stayed and married, and published widely on an array of topics that included medicine, paleography, linguistics, numismatics, cartography, history, metrical romances, education, and social problems.

He was elected president of the Partido Federalista, the foremost political party in the Philippines in the early 1900s. The party platform included eventual annexation of islands by the United States.<sup>22</sup> Given that the Sedition Law passed by the US Congress in 1901 provided for the death penalty or a long prison term for anyone advocating independence from the US even by peaceful means, this political party's rise was hardly surprising. Since it was the only political vehicle supported by United States government officials, it is difficult to assess whether its constituents actually professed the party's beliefs or joined the party out of political necessity. There is

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<sup>21</sup> The history of Tavera's uncle, Don Joaquin Pardo de Tavera, is an interesting one. He was an outspoken advocate of colonial reform, which ended up being the principle reason for suspicion by the Spanish authorities that he participated in the Cavite Mutiny of 1872—a charge he denied. He was summarily exiled to Guam, but later forgiven. Deciding that emigrating to France would offer a better future than returning to the Philippines, he moved to Paris. He would later be the host of many ilustrados abroad, including José Rizal, among others.

<sup>22</sup>For more information on political parties in the Philippines, see Rommel C. Bahlaoui and Clarita R. Carlos, *Political Parties in the Philippines: from 1900 to the Present* (Makati City: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 1996).



some evidence to suspect that Tavera may have preferred American annexation, however, as he stuck to his affiliation as a Federalista even after the Sedition Law was relaxed and the Partido Nacionalista, whose platform included independence from the US, was recognized in 1907. The Nacionalistas became the dominant political party in that same year and would remain so until the 1930s.

In 1912, Tavera gave a political speech in Manila to an audience of American and Filipino officials titled the “New Filipino Mentality.”<sup>23</sup> His speech is largely a response to comments made by U.S. officials like Dean C. Worcester, also a member of the Philippine Commission, regarding the idea that Muslims actually made better colonial subjects because they had never been under the corrupting influence of the Spanish friars and there was no ready equivalent to the Filipino Mestizo elite.<sup>24</sup> He evidences how elite Filipino politicians began to define what being Filipino meant and how that related to the Muslims of the south. He states that:

Amongst the Christians, the Spaniards created and maintained what might be called Causes of Aggregation, not only by the imposition of one king, one flag, one law and one religion and language, as I have said, but in insisting on fixing in the mind of the Filipino ideas of fraternity, solidarity of the nation, paternal government of the ruler, filial submission on the subject, the obligation of the former to protect the latter, and confidence of the governed in the omnipotence of the king on earth and in his religion to secure eternal bliss in a future life. It does not now concern us to ascertain whether this program was faithfully carried out in practise [sic] in the Philippines, as it is not our purpose to write a historical criticism but to analyze a pschycological [sic] transformation.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Trinidad Pardo H. de Tavera, “The New Filipino Mentality,” Edward Bowditch Papers, Cornell University, Box 1, 13.

<sup>24</sup> See Dean C. Worcester, *The Philippines Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1914), chapters 20-25. As quoted in Vicente Rafael, *White Love, and other Events in Filipino History* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2000), 47.

<sup>25</sup> Tavera, “The New Filipino Mentality,” 13.

Tavera locates progress in the “Causes of Aggregation” created by the Spanish, and stresses that there existed an important psychological transformation in the (Christian) Filipino mind that implanted ideas of fraternity, nationalism, responsible governance, loyalty to the state, the obligation of the state to protect its citizenry, and the peace of mind that eternal bliss in a future life could be secured by having confidence in the ruling regime and in one’s religious values. He views all of these things as the provenance of the Christian Filipino alone. He is careful to direct attention away from historical criticism, perhaps suspecting that he would be challenged by Filipino nationalists that had rebelled against Spain and likely felt quite different about the Spanish contributions. His perception of Spain’s legacy in the islands can be attributed to his background as a Filipino Manileño with Spanish roots and relatives connected to the Spanish colonial administration. His division of the peoples of the Philippine archipelago along ethnoreligious lines allows him to explore what he terms the “Filipino mentality.”

This mentality is a legacy of the Spanish colonists not solely due to the causes of aggregation that he mentions, but also to the territorial unity that the Spanish regime accomplished. Tavera states that Spanish domination of the Filipinos was a useful change in that:

it invoked, in order to justify war, the necessity of establishing peace among tribes in a chronic state of mutual armed aggression, making them see that they were all brothers, that all were under the same flag and under the same king; that bonds of union should exist amongst them instead of bloody antagonisms; that all united for the common benefit would insure peace and become stronger to repel foreign aggression and to subdue the southern Moros.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Tavera, 17.

Tavera's justification of the Spanish regime's actions reveals his internalization of the Spanish colonial narrative. One wonders whether he learned to think of colonization that way from his *peninsular* parents. To Tavera, Filipinos were brothers that could not see their fraternal bonds due to bloody antagonisms and constant aggression until the Spanish brought them under the same flag and the same king, which are powerful symbols in Tavera's speech of unity and fraternity. Moros remained decidedly outside of these fraternal bonds. While Filipinos were progressing along the scales of civilization, measured by their conception of nationalism and unity, Moros were still warring with each other and Filipinos in an unevolved, primitive state:

While we note this evolution in the Filipinos...we find that the mountain tribes and the Moros continued in the same state of barbarism that characterized those times. The idea of a common country had not yet penetrated their primitive consciousness, their independence has not yet a *national* character but is simply of a *tribal* character [sic]: it is the independence of a family [Tavera's emphasis].<sup>27</sup>

Through Tavera's characterization of the Muslims as barbaric and stuck in the past, he reinforces the more evolved nature of the Filipinos. He opines that Muslim desire for independence must be considered distinctly from that of the Filipino and that Muslims can only aspire to the independence of a family. He argues that the Muslims are unable to identify with a sense of a greater "nation," instead seeing the tribe as the largest unit of grouping. The value of his characterization tells us little about the Muslims themselves and more about attitudes of elite Filipino intellectuals and the ways they used the Muslims conceptually as a mechanism to highlight and define a national Filipino character. To elite intellectuals like Tavera, the Muslims were primitive peoples stuck in the past that could be civilized by Filipinos. He goes so far

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<sup>27</sup> Tavera, 17.

as to delegitimize their desires for independence by dismissing them as the desires limited to a family wanting to be independent. These desires even become a site of comparison for Tavera to highlight the more reasoned and developed nature of the Filipino's quest for autonomy.

According to Tavera:

Their [ie Moros'] sense of *aggrroupment* [sic] did not go beyond the association of a limited number of individuals; we see that there is a limited feeling in favor of aggregation; that in favor of the aggregation of tribes does not exist; on the contrary, the spirit of *segregation* predominates amongst them, for which reason their spirited desire for independence is of no value for their civilization. They look upon the Christians as foreigners and if we regard them as belonging to a common country it is only because our new mentality has made us capable of forming this idea [Tavera's emphasis].

There are several interesting things at work in this passage. As stated previously, Moro desires for independence are distinct from that of the Filipino, and in fact, Moro tribes of the south embody a spirit of segregation such that these desires are of "no value" for their civilization as a whole. Tavera is correct to point out that the Muslim population consisted of several different ethnolinguistic groups and there was no significant unification movement in 1912.<sup>28</sup> Although Tavera seems to recognize the resistance of the Moros to forming a unit based on their tribal affiliation, he chooses to attribute this to a primitive mentality rather than to diversity of beliefs and a history of competition. Filipino desire to include the Muslims as part of the nascent nation becomes more evidence that Filipinos have advanced. Tavera argues that the Filipinos' "new mentality" is that of a civilized people.

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<sup>28</sup> Note the contrast with the Chinese community in the Philippines who at this point did self-identify as a group. For more on the formation of collective identity based on being Muslim, see McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels*. For more on the Chinese communities, see Edgar Wickberg, *Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).

Any prominence or prestige that Muslims had among the Filipinos and Americans, he attributes as products of barbarism. He confides that:

with respect to the mountain tribes and Moros, the lowland Filipino also regarded them as inferior to himself.... With respect to the Moros, their predatory activity, piracy and the terror inspired by their conduct to the Christians were certainly sufficient reasons for their having won a certain prominence and prestige; but the Spaniards, as leaders of the Christian Filipinos, gave the Moros lessons sufficiently severe to raise the vanity of the Filipinos to the point of placing it, with good grounds, over that of the Moros.<sup>29</sup>

His characterization of the Moros as predators, pirates, and sources of terror for their Christian counterparts is juxtaposed in his speech with his description of Filipino Christians and the lessons that Catholicism in general taught the Filipinos, evidencing his pro-Spanish tendencies. His pride in the “lessons” the Spaniards taught is perhaps misplaced as the Sulu and Magindanao sultans had been able to resist Spanish rule for well over two hundred years. Tavera then gets even more specific about the consequences of Spanish colonialism and of Catholicism more generally. He declares that “the synthetic result of the intervention of Spain in our archipelago was the *foundation of Philippine nationality* and of the *thought* translated to the desire *and necessity of national independence* [Tavera’s emphasis],” an assertion he’s able to make through the comparison with parts of the archipelago that remained on the peripheries of Spanish control.<sup>30</sup> The history of the Muslim tribes act as an essential cultural precipice that Tavera can climb to gain a bird’s eye view of what he sees as the legacy of Spain to her colony. From such a vantage point, Tavera is able to define the character of the Filipino more generally. Since the American colonial mission

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<sup>29</sup> Tavera, 14.

<sup>30</sup> Tavera, 24.

stressed the occupation of the Philippines as a way to prepare the Filipinos for democracy, Tavera uses the Muslims to highlight the similarities of Filipinos to the new (and former) colonial administration. Unlike typical nationalists promoting independence, Tavera and other intellectuals could not use the United States as the outsider to define the nascent nation since the path to independence was perceived to lie more in convincing the US that Filipinos were civilized. Note his comments on Catholicism, meaningful only in comparison to the religions of other Filipino peoples since Americans largely embraced a similar faith:

...Catholicism substituted for fatalism hope; taught mercy, charity, individual responsibility in future life; made it understood that work was the lot of man without distinction of class, though it gave it the biblical character of an expiatory course the injustice of which was not analyzed because the primitive Philippine mentality thought that the community might incur responsibility [sic] for an individual offense; it established a fundamental and elementary ethic with the ten commandments of the Mosaic law; it uplifted woman; it founded the ideal of justice equally distributed before the tribunal of God who dispenses rewards and and [sic] punishments according to the merits of each individual without regard to the distinctions established on earth and, with the example of Christ giving his life [sic] for the redemption of mankind, it sustained the spirit of Rizal serene and smiling until the moment he lost his life for the redemption of his country.<sup>31</sup>

He credits Catholicism for teaching Filipinos lessons in civilization—measured by their acceptance of responsibility for their actions, development of an ethical code based on values in the Ten Commandments, treatment of women, and conceptions of justice and sacrifice. His placement of Rizal in the tradition of Jesus is significant—showing that the Filipino nation was beginning to take on a divine, holy importance to the Filipino elite. His use of Catholicism to express nationalist sentiments is situated in the larger historical trend of using the Muslim and other non-Christian outsiders in

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<sup>31</sup> Tavera, 24.

order to place the Filipinos closer to the Americans on the scale of civilization so as to achieve autonomy.<sup>32</sup>

Tavera's speech, in addition to defining the new Filipino mentality, also addressed the notions of certain colonial officials regarding the Filipinos. He declares that:

On account of the easy manner in which many barangays were brought under Spanish sway as well as of the loyalty with which they associated themselves with the Spaniards in order to cooperate with them in the conquest of their neighbors, compared to the conduct observed by the mountain tribes [sic] and by the Moros, some persons have thoughtlessly made a wrong deduction. It consists in supposing that the Filipinos of the lowlands, afterward called Christian Filipinos, were pathetic, servile, weak and destined to live forever under foreign sovereignty. Such persons likewise inferred from the resistance [sic] offered by the mountain folk afterward called infidels, that they acted under the true influence of patriotism, as the true representatives of national independence the Moros being cited as the finished type of invincible patriotism. We shall soon see what were the results of the submission of the lowland people and of the unyielding character of the others.<sup>33</sup>

This passage gives us a fuller picture of the context of Tavera's speech and of the elite's attempt to define a national character in juxtaposition to the Muslims. Just as they were seeking to define themselves, they too were being defined by their colonial administrators. Tavera seems especially offended that Americans or others would admire the Muslims as products of patriotism.

Tavera concludes by saying that "this is, Ladies and Gentlemen, in broad outline, the new Filipino mentality, catalogued in the same table with the civilized

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<sup>32</sup> The question of intentionality emerges: how aware were Filipinos of what they were doing? The answer to this varies with the degree of interiority one is able to gain in the historical record. Tavera shows strong signs of internalizing the civilizational order that he describes. Regardless of his intentions, his speech on the "New Filipino Mentality" depends on the Muslims and non-Christians to serve as examples of an earlier, more unevolved Filipino mentality. It seems very conscious, but the fact that they could be unabashed about it then versus now is in itself interesting and suggestive of the changes in context.

<sup>33</sup> Tavera, 13.

mentality of modern peoples. In this table are two grades: no one claims that the Philippines shall take first rank, but it is on the right road over which it will travel without obstacles or great difficulties.”<sup>34</sup> The first rank that he referred to belonged to Americans, but Tavera’s clear references tying the “new Filipino mentality” with values taught by Christianity, allow one to infer that by “Philippines,” he means the Christian Filipinos, leaving Muslims and the non-Christian tribes inside the geo-body but outside the newer, *advanced*, Christian mentality.

Evidence of the ways that the nascent Filipino state used the Moro tribes is seen not only through the speeches of colonial collaborators such as Trinidad Pardo H. de Tavera. The political writings of Sergio Osmeña, a critical political figure who would emerge as one of the most powerful elected members of the Philippine Assembly, also uses the Muslims as background against which he defines the Filipino nation and measures its readiness in achieving independence. Osmeña, an *ilustrado* from an elite family from Cebu, presided over the Nacionalista Party, which was formed in 1906 and was the affiliation of 65 of the 81 delegates in the Philippine Assembly and of 23 out of 31 provincial governors.<sup>35</sup> His previous roles in the colonial administration included being appointed acting governor of Cebu province in 1904 and then serving as elected governor with the backing of Governor-general Cameron Forbes and ex-governor Taft in 1906.

In 1910, he penned a submission to the Secretary of the Philippine Commission in which he argues that Filipino control of Muslims and non-Christians is necessary. He states that:

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<sup>34</sup> Tavera, 27.

<sup>35</sup> As reported by Sergio Osmeña, Edward Bowditch Papers, Cornell University, Box 3, 1.



If the Filipino nation is to govern itself in the future, and if these tribes are to form part of that nation, it is necessary that they be made to look upon the Christians as brethren, as fellow-citizens, with whom they will live and be united in a communion of culture and aspirations. The Christians—as we have said elsewhere—cannot be said to be so lacking in practical sense as not to understand that it is to their interest to civilize these non-Christian tribes, which are an important factor in the population as well as in the defense of the native land.<sup>36</sup>

Osmeña begins his appeal by reiterating the official mission of the American colonial project (Filipino self-governance when ready) and posits that Filipinos understand the need for the Moros to see them as fellow-citizens. What is most significant about this passage, however, is that he positions Filipinos as capable of civilizing the non-Christian tribes, an interesting localization of Kipling's "white man's burden." In a different Southeast Asian context, Tamara Loos has compellingly argued in *Subject Siam: Family, Law, and Colonial Modernity in Thailand* that the Thai state patterned its rule of the southern Muslim provinces after British colonial rule, a process through which Siam could showcase its modernity as also being a colonial power. Osmeña's suggestions on behalf of the Nacionalista Party are in line with this pattern of thought. His contention that Filipinos can take the reins for the governance of the Moro tribes and civilize them is a way of elevating the Filipino to the level of the colonist.

In fact, he blames tension between Filipinos and the Moro tribes of the south on the Americans, arguing that the separation in how the Christian Filipinos are governed and how the special provinces are governed leads to problems. He wrote to Governor-general William Cameron Forbes in 1910 that:

This separation only tends to encourage a lack of common interests that in practice is converted into unreasonable prejudice toward one another. The idea should be inculcated into the people of these tribes that this is a Filipino

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<sup>36</sup> Osmeña, 56.

government and for this reason they should be accustomed to seeing Filipinos at the head of the governments established among them. The idea that is at present infused into them is that they must be protected from the alleged abuses of their own brethren, the Filipinos.<sup>37</sup>

Osmeña accomplishes several things in this passage. To begin with, he attributes the mutual prejudice between Filipinos and Moros to the American administration of the colony. He then argues that the Moros must be made to understand that it is a Filipino government. However, Moros are clearly not considered to be Filipino, but only brethren to them—and younger, subordinate siblings at that. Moro participation in anything other than subjects to a Filipino-led government, however, is never mentioned or indeed, intended.

To make such an assertion, Osmeña had to first address reports of abuse of the Muslim communities by Filipinos. He writes that:

the fact that there have been instances of Filipinos invested with official authority over non-Christian tribes committing acts of abuse and oppression does not indicate a general policy, nor is it the standard of the conduct of the Christian people as a whole toward the non-Christian tribes. The reference to those abuses seem [sic] to indicate the belief that the Christian inhabitants are not disposed to deal with the non-Christians justly and liberally, so as to give them an opportunity to attain the degree of civilization acquired by the Christian inhabitants....<sup>38</sup>

He both dismisses abuses by Filipinos as isolated acts and reinforces the notion that the Christian inhabitants have attained a higher degree of civilization. He goes on to discuss the merits of Filipinos and their capability to govern the Muslims with Muslim interests in mind. He argues that the Filipinos are able to govern them even better than the Muslim communities themselves would be able to do. This smacks of the same

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<sup>37</sup> Osmeña, 56.

<sup>38</sup> Osmeña, 40.

colonial justification given by the United States in possessing the Philippines.

Osmeña opines that:

Surely there is no lack of Christian Filipinos of proved [sic] executive ability who can govern these tribes in accordance with the latter's interest and welfare. The present political and administrative organization, which separates the Christians from those who are not such, does not tend to prepare the people for an independent Filipino government, but creates for this latter in its time difficulties in its relations with the inhabitants of the non-Christian pueblos. If the Philippine Assembly had jurisdiction over the territory occupied by the non-Christian tribes and over the Moro Province, the rational interest that the Christian peoples feel toward the progress and welfare of the pagan peoples would be made plain.<sup>39</sup>

Not only does he blame American administration of the archipelago for creating the rift between Muslims and Filipinos, but also opines that such rifts have made to seem larger than they actually are. He declares that "the idea has nearly always been exaggerated that there is real rivalry and hatred between the Christian and the non-Christian inhabitants. Nothing is, however, falser than this idea."<sup>40</sup> He continues, stating that "the simple notice among the non-Christian tribes of the establishment of a Filipino government in Malolos produced a genuine rapprochement in the feelings and relations of the Christian and non-Christian peoples, and the latter voluntarily offered their recognition and loyal support to the authorities of that government."<sup>41</sup> Osmeña's statement occludes the fact that Moro tribes of the south ignored letters from Malolos politicians, and some even conducted raids into territory claimed by the Malolos Republic.<sup>42</sup> It is hard to say whether Osmeña's retelling of the past was deliberate or if it was based on faulty information. However, what is more significant is the fact

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<sup>39</sup> Osmeña, 56.

<sup>40</sup> Osmeña, 40.

<sup>41</sup> Osmeña, 40.

<sup>42</sup> Cesar Adib Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines* (Diliman: University of the Philippines Press, 1999), 371.

that he devotes so much space to discussing and redefining the relationship between Filipinos and Muslims.

The declaration that he authored in the name of the Nacionalista party was meant for none other than the President of the United States in 1910, William Howard Taft. It was a declaration with a wide scope and an ambitious task: the acquisition of independence and the establishment of Filipino governance across the entire archipelago. Osmeña thus argues from within this framework that not only are Filipinos capable of governance and assuming the burden of civilizing their tribal counterparts, but that they are able to do so in a manner superior even to that of the Americans. He writes that:

We are convinced that a Filipino government is the only one that will be able to reach in a permanent manner and without violence a definite understanding with the non-Christian communities of the Islands, because the latter, in spite of the differences in religion and customs, do not and cannot escape the influence of ethnical [sic] unity and affinity. This circumstance gives the Christian Filipinos the advantage of a better knowledge of the psychology of their fellow-countrymen and of establishing with them that class of relations which tends to consolidate national unity.<sup>43</sup>

He makes appeals to what he imagines to be the “ethnical” unity of these two groups. This idea had gained an increasing amount of purchase among American colonial officials. However, it should be pointed out that previous notions of race in the Philippines classified Filipinos (the Tagalogs and Cebuanos being two principal groups) as “raza Malay” while the Moro groups of the south were classified as “raza indonesiana.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Osmeña, 41.

<sup>44</sup> See map of the racial make-up of the Islands, compiled by the Jesuits in 1898, p. 23-24.

Trinidad Pardo H. de Tavera, discussed above, published an etymology of names for the races of the Philippines in the 1890s that sheds light on how racial lines were previously drawn. He writes that:

Political divisions of the islands respond to divisions based on language so that we can characterize the provinces and how they should be grouped by those that speak the same language. We find in the island of Luzon the following: Tagalog, Pampango, Bicol, Pangasinan, Sambal, Ilocano, Ibanag or Cagaya. After we see that with each of these provinces exist different tribes, many with different languages, that have for one reason or another, a different name. The Visayas apply to three dialects spoken in Cebu, Iloilo and Negros: Calamian o Cuyo is also a linguistic group and upon arriving to Mindanao we see that the territorial division is no longer of the character that it is in Luzon.<sup>45</sup>

To the Spanish, differences in language were more of a determining factor in classifying the various tribes. Priests had much more experience getting to know the cultural distinctiveness of these tribes than American colonial officials, whose time in the Philippines was generally of much shorter duration. For the Spanish, classifying the tribes by language held political advantages—each different language group could have its own friar to learn the language, reorganize the populace, and collect tax and tribute for the Spanish crown. As American political power was mediated through municipal governments, as long as the language groups had representation it mattered little that two groups speaking different languages may be grouped together.

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<sup>45</sup> Trinidad Pardo H. de Tavera, *Etimología de los Nombres de Razas de Filipinas* (Manila: Establecimiento Tipográfico de Modesto Reyes y C.ª, 1901) 1. Translation mine. The original reads: *Las divisiones políticas de las islas responden casi siempre á divisiones fundadas en la lengua, de manera que, principiando por hacernos cargo de los nombres que caracterizan las provincias cuando estas se aplican á agrupaciones que hablan la misma lengua, hallamos en la isla de Luzón los siguientes: Tagalog, Pampango, Bicol, Pangasinan, Sambál, Ilocano, Ibanag ó Cagayan. Despues veremos que dentro de cada una de estas provincias existen diferentes tribus, muchas con lengua distinta que llevan, por esta razón ó por otra desconocida, un nombre diferente. Bisayas se aplica á tres dialectos hablados en Cebú, Iloilo y Negros: Calamian ó Cuyo es tambien nombre de agrupación lingüista y al llegar á Mindanao vemos que la división territorial no es ya del carácter que en Luzón.*

Evidence of the change in ethnic categorization among American colonial officials comes to us from Najeeb M. Saleeby, assistant chief of the Bureau of Non Christian Tribes in charge of Moro Affairs, and member of the Legislative Council of the Moro Province from September 1903 to June 1906. In 1913 (3 years after submission of the Nacionalista Party's petition for independence authored by Osmeña), Saleeby published *The Moro Problem: An Academic Discussion of the History and Solution of the Problem of the Government of the Moros of the Philippine Islands*. He writes that:

The general impression that the public has of the Moros is very incorrect... The majority of Americans and Spaniards who came in contact with them had neither respect nor sympathy for anything that was not American or European and unjustly looked upon them as savages and fanatics.... *Remove hostility, and the thin veneer of religion and dress, and the Moro is in every respect a Filipino. He makes a good friend and a good pupil and is more industrious than the average Christian* [emphasis added].<sup>46</sup>

Saleeby describes religion and dress as a thin veneer despite the fact that culture is so often situated in a people's religious practices and everyday dress. He also glosses over the hostility between Christian Filipinos and Muslims, one which has a long historical trajectory when Christianized *indios* of the Visayas and southern Luzon had to worry about piracy from seafaring Muslims. Given Saleeby's knowledge of the Moro Province, his work was influential in the development of the area and shows that Osmeña's claims to a common ethnic stock with the Moro tribes of the south had significant purchase with the American colonists.

This purchase allowed Osmeña and other elite political leaders to use the Moros as a foil and a barometer for the readiness for self-governance in a way that still

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<sup>46</sup> Saleeby, 23.

preserved them as part of the nascent nation. Filipinos were eager to assume governance of the Muslim tribes and patterned themselves after the Americans in their quest to do so. Osmeña writes that:

We [the Nacionalista Party] rejoice in being able to state that the good sense and the good qualities demonstrated by the Filipino people in adapting their lives and customs to the practices of the civilized nations of Europe and America, give ample reason for expecting that with its present practical experience it will achieve success in its work of attempting an independent government.<sup>47</sup>

He is careful, however, to give credit to Americans for the progress made. However, he nuances this credit with a strong declaration that such “supervision” is no longer needed.

Towards the end of the proclamation, he writes in 1912 that:

...They acknowledge that the American people has conducted itself with liberality [sic] toward the Filipinos after the latter were conquered. But at the same time they believe that if much providential designs did exist, they have been completely carried out, and that after the twelve years that North America has sheltered these Islands under its flag and has given its inhabitants an idea of the theory and practice of a free people and a free government, its mission in these Islands has been fulfilled with honor and glory to itself, and it can entrust the government to the Filipinos with entire safety for the interests of the latter and of all the residents of the country. The Filipinos have at all times demonstrated a large spirit of progress, a high interest in assimilating all the ideas and practices of the civilized peoples, and it is not to be doubted that they will work in accordance with these ideas and practices upon taking their place among the nations of the earth.<sup>48</sup>

We find then that little more than a decade after the establishment of the American colonial regime in the archipelago, the largest political party in the Philippines was already positing that Filipinos were not only ready for self-governance but could also be put in charge of governing territories previously outside of their

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<sup>47</sup> Osmeña, 42.

<sup>48</sup> Osmeña, 55.

control and civilizing the various peoples that called these territories home. Elite political figures, like Sergio Osmeña and others in the Nacionalista Party, used the Moro tribes (along with other non-Christian tribes) then as a venue to request further control of affairs in the colony. Their pleas did not fall on deaf ears. With the election of Woodrow Wilson to the presidency in 1912, Democrats were given a chance to substitute their visions of Filipino state-building in place of those pursued by the three Republican administrations that preceded them (McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and Taft). Where Republicans viewed the process of readying the Philippines for independence as a long one, Democrats favored a much more rapid transfer of power. 1912 saw the appointment of Governor-general Francis Burton Harrison who was in charge of implementing the “Filipinization” of the colony. Executive positions previously held solely by Americans were transferred over to Filipinos, who assumed a much greater role in the state. Perhaps the only exception was in the field of education where American colonial officials still held the highest positions. Of great significance to the Moro tribes, Harrison also transferred the authority for administering the Moro Province from the US Army to civilian Filipino politicians.

The Moro Province would be reorganized as the Department of Mindanao and Sulu in 1913. Filipinos would institute a series of changes, many concerning land reform of the area.<sup>49</sup> This transfer of power would integrate Muslim elites into the Philippine political system for the first time—they became the political brokers mediating between their communities and the Filipino colonial state. The charge of civilizing the Muslims would go to the largely Filipino-run Bureau of non-Christian

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<sup>49</sup> For more elaboration, see Chapter 3, under the subheading “Agricultural Development and Colonial Migration.”



tribes. One of the executives of the bureau summarized its duty as “to continue the work for advancement and liberty in favor of the regions inhabited by non-Christian Filipinos, and foster by all adequate means, and in a systematic, rapid, and complete manner, the moral, material, economic, social, and political development of those regions, always having in view the aim of rendering permanent the mutual intelligence between, and complete fusion of, the Christian and non-Christian elements populating the provinces of the archipelago.”<sup>50</sup>

With the passage of the Philippine Autonomy Act in 1916, Filipinos gained even greater control of the state. The act “placed in the hands of the people of the Philippines as large a control of their domestic affairs as can be given them.”<sup>51</sup> This power, however, was still mediated by the governor general and the United States Congress, as Congress ultimately held the authority to decide on economic issues involving trade. The act abolished the Philippine Commission and gave the Commission’s legislative powers to the upper house of a newly created bicameral legislature.<sup>52</sup>

Filipino control of the state, however, would be challenged with the election of Republican Warren Harding in 1921. Harding replaced Governor-general Harrison with Governor-general Leonard Wood, who had served as military governor of the Moro Province from 1903 to 1906. Wood would work to reverse the policies of the

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<sup>50</sup> Camilo Osias and Manuel Quezon, *Governor-general Wood and the Filipino Cause* (Manila: Oriental Printing, 1924), 44.

<sup>51</sup> Philippine Autonomy Act, as cited in Abinales and Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines*, 140.

<sup>52</sup> Frank Golay, *Face of Empire: United States-Philippine Relations, 1898-1946* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 176.

Harrison administration and to return the Department of Mindanao and Sulu to more American control.<sup>53</sup>

His time as Governor-general is especially relevant to this study as his attempts at reversing the transfer of power produced an outcry among the Filipino political elite. Not only did they protest his manner of governance, but also his views concerning the separation of Mindanao and Sulu from the rest of the colony, which he advocated in a report co-authored with former Governor-general Cameron Forbes. This outcry was articulated by Manuel Quezon, then president of the Philippine Senate, and Camilo Osias, then president of the National University, in the book they co-authored, *Governor-General Wood and the Filipino Cause*, which was published in 1924. The ways in which the Moro tribes of the south were discussed in the book once again show their importance in the construction of the nascent nation-state.

Osias strongly manifests the importance of racial commonality, insisting that there is Philippine ethnic homogeneity and national solidarity despite differences in religion and “emphasis given to the diversity of ethnographic groups and distinct language dialects in the Philippines.” He argues that a “spirit of nationality” has grown and been recognized (by Secretary of War John W. Weeks, at least) as “being no longer in question.” He quotes Dr. Merton I. Miller, who was an American scientist that was chief ethnologist of the American Bureau of Science, to contend that there is an “essential homogeneity of the Filipino People.” Osias tells us that

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<sup>53</sup> Although evidence of Muslim viewpoints is somewhat scarce, Datu Piang of Dulawan, in an interview in 1926, states “the American army officers who governed us then [1900-1913] were good men and just,” showing that Wood had the support of certain Muslims. “Interview with Datu Piang of Dulawan, 1926,” Joseph Ralston Hayden Papers, University of Michigan, Box 28-24, as cited in Abinales and Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines*, 145.

according to Miller, “from the extreme northern end of the Archipelago to its southern-most limits, with the exception of the few scattered Negritos, the people of the Philippines, pagan, Moro, and Christian, are one racially. There is some reason for believing that they migrated into the islands at two different times. But in all probability they came from the same general region and have a common ancestry.”<sup>54</sup>

By playing down differences among the peoples of the archipelago by arguing that they are all from the same ethnic stock, Osias is more firmly placing the Muslims within the limits of the Filipino state given their racial bonds. He also speaks more directly on their behalf when asked by the Secretary of War about how well the Philippine government had kept the faith to protect and assimilate its Muslim and non-Christian minorities. Osias states that “I have myself been partly responsible for the direction of the non-Christian peoples during my incumbency in the directorate of the Bureau of Education, and I say from authoritative knowledge that that faith has been well kept, far better kept than under the Forbes-Worcester regime.”<sup>55</sup>

Osias continues his discussion of the Muslim communities and comments on the greater amount of progress made by Filipino administrators of the region as opposed to their American counterparts, stating that:

Ladies and gentlemen: Conscious of the responsibility that weighs heavily upon my shoulders on this solemn hour, I wish to state as dispassionately as is possible under the circumstances that it remained for the period when the Filipino people and Filipino officials had better control of their own affairs and of the non-Christian people *to achieve the greatest work of uplift and of progress ever accomplished in the non-Christian territory and for the non-Christian people of the Philippines* [emphasis added].<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Osias, *Governor-General Wood and the Filipino Cause*, 42. Although I have looked for the original source containing this quote to confirm its authenticity, I have been unable to locate it.

<sup>55</sup> Osias, 42-43.

<sup>56</sup> Osias, 43.

The progress accomplished in the non-Christian territories of the Philippines is wholly attributed to the Filipino people, de-emphasizing as a matter of course the role that the non-Christians themselves played in this process. The advancement and progress of the Muslims is used as a measure of Filipino achievement. The following passage makes this even clearer. Responding to Governor-general Wood's request that the Bureau of Non-Christian tribes be placed under the department of public instruction "in order to facilitate the preparation of these groups to undertake more fully the responsibilities and obligations of citizenship," Osias writes that:

...[I]f the transfer had been made [it would have increased my] influence as a functionary of the Government; but above being a government official should be the consciousness of a national that he is a Filipino and from the standpoint of the Philippine Government as a whole and from the standpoint of his being a Filipino, he believed then and he believes now that the transfer recommended was wrong—*wrong because one of the great achievements of the Filipinos in the last few years is found in the great work of uplift and nationalization of our Non-Christian brethren.* The incontrovertible fact is that the non-Christian Filipinos received the best treatment and attention when the Filipinos were given greater control of their own affairs.... [Osmeña's emphasis]<sup>57</sup>

This passage confirms that the progress of the non-Christians was used as a way to measure the accomplishments of the Filipino elite in the management of the state. Attention should also be paid to the fact that the non-Christian "brethren" are brought even closer into the state, and are now also referred to as non-Christian "Filipinos," evidencing an important shift from the census of 1903 that stated that Filipino could properly apply only to the Christian population.

### ***Conclusion***

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<sup>57</sup> Osias, 82, 83.

The non-Christian areas of the archipelago, although located in the Philippine periphery, were in no way peripheral to the development of the nascent nation state of the country. The uncertain future of the territorial integrity of the colony, divergent American opinions on the speed at which to transfer power to the locals, and the question of how Filipinos could prove that they were ready for autonomy and independence all contributed the highly contested development of the nation-state. Even into the 1920s, calls were made for the separation of Mindanao and Sulu from what became increasingly considered the Christian Philippines. In the early years of state formation, Philippine intellectuals used the Muslims and other outsiders that were ranked lower on the scale of civilization as a basis of comparison for Filipinos and the Americans.

As the speech by former Philippine commissioner Pardo H. de Tavera in 1912 shows, colonization by Spain became glorified as a civilizing force that made Filipinos more educated in the ways of the West. He lauds Spanish rule as helping to develop a more “authentic” (i.e. Western) form of nationalism and patriotism, although the Spanish crown ruled largely through friars for most of the colonial period. He defines Filipino nationalism in contrast to the desires for autonomy of the Moro tribes—the desires of these groups were more akin to the autonomy sought by a “family” rather than a “nation.” He defined the Filipinos as a people who were taught the values of hope, charity, individual responsibility, compassion, equality, ethics, justice equally distributed, and redemption—all lessons of Catholicism that Muslims did not receive. Tavera credits the ability to conceive of the nation to a new, more developed, and more civilized Filipino mentality. Given the nature of the American colonial mission

in the Philippines—to govern for the benefit of the Filipinos only until they were ready to govern themselves—Americans became the models for the Filipinos. As such, they could not define the nascent nation in opposition to them; instead, they defined it in opposition to their Moro and other non-Christian outsiders.

While Tavera gives us evidence of how the Muslims were used as a foil to define a national Filipino character, the petition of the Nacionalista Party, authored by Sergio Osmeña, is representative of how the colonized Filipino elite could exploit the “less civilized” status of their counterparts by positioning themselves in a role occupied by their colonizers. Osmeña’s proposal that the Filipinos be given charge of not only civilizing the Moros but governing them in their best interest is a powerful and strategic declaration that the Filipinos had “developed” to a point that put them on not only an even level with the American colonists regarding the administration of Mindanao, but on a superior one due to the ethnic commonalities between the Filipinos and the Muslims. It also evidences an internalization of American colonial ideology. Through the petition, the Nacionalista party is positing that they are able to shoulder the “white man’s burden” even better than the white (American) man himself. The appeals to the idea of a common ethnic stock found purchase with American colonial official officials.

Just as the Nacionalista Party’s petition shows how Filipinos could argue for their readiness for autonomy by positing their superior ability to “civilize” the Moro, so too does the co-authorship of Manuel Quezon and Camilo Osias of *Governor-general Wood and the Filipino Cause* evidence the ways that the Filipino elite used the progress of the Moro tribes as a measurement of their own accomplishments. This

work also shows us the evolving meaning of the term Filipino as more effort is made to be inclusive of the minorities given the impending threat of the division of the archipelago.

These three sources, largely overlooked by historians, add nuance to the relationship between the Philippine metropole and the periphery by showing how leaders of the nascent state depended on the Muslim and non-Christian outsiders to prove to their American overlords that they had attained a high enough degree of civilization to be granted autonomy and control of the state. Even at the state's very inception under American colonial rule in the early 1900s, the Moros played a critical role in helping political leaders define a national Filipino character and fortify their power.

## CHAPTER 3

### COLONIAL MIMICRY

In his inaugural address to the Third Philippine Legislature on October 6, 1913, newly appointed Democrat Governor-General Francis Burton Harrison conveyed the following message on behalf of President Wilson:

We regard ourselves as trustees acting not for the advantage of the United States but for the benefit of the people of the Philippine Islands. Every step we take will be taken with a view to the ultimate independence of the Islands and as a preparation for that independence. And we hope to move towards that end as rapidly as the safety and the permanent interests of the Islands will permit...the administration will take one step at once and will give to the native citizens of the Islands a majority in the appointive Commission, and thus in the Upper as well as in the Lower House of the Legislature a majority representation will be secured to them. ...In promising you on behalf of the administration immediate control of both branches of your Legislature I remind you, however, that for the present we are responsible to the world for your welfare and for your progress.<sup>1</sup>

Harrison's message heralded a decisive shift in American colonial policy in the Philippines. From the beginning of American involvement in the archipelago, Republicans held the majority of seats in Congress and the presidency. As major proponents of free trade, they were backed by interests in favor of imperialism: capitalists and industrialists looking for cheap sources of raw materials and expanded markets; and analysts that recognized the strategic importance of having a military presence in the Far East. The policies and views of the McKinley (1897-1901), Roosevelt (1901-1909), and Taft (1909-1913) administrations favored a long tutelage of the Filipinos in order allegedly to prepare them for democratic self-government.

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<sup>1</sup> Francis Burton Harrison, *The Corner-Stone of Philippine Independence: A Narrative of Seven Years* (New York: Century Co., 1922), 50.



Many posited that this would take at least one generation for Christian Filipinos and two for the Muslim and pagan minorities.<sup>2</sup>

During the Republican administrations, the Democratic Party, which had opposed Filipino colonization to begin with, “voiced furious protest of American occupation and proposed independence ‘at every opportunity.’”<sup>3</sup> The Democratic Party had allied itself closely with the interests of domestic tobacco, sugar, and other agricultural producers who viewed Filipino goods as competition. They were also backed by the considerable political influence of the Anti-Imperialist League.<sup>4</sup>

The vying interests of the two parties created what political scientist David Steinberg termed “self-liquidating imperialism,” which espoused the dual doctrines of free trade and scheduled decolonization (at least officially) from the very beginning of American rule.<sup>5</sup> The election of both a majority of democrats to the House of Representatives in March 1911 and of Woodrow Wilson to the presidency in 1913 should be considered important turning points in Philippine colonial history as accelerated “decolonization” became more important to American policymakers. Democrats more intensely desired an accelerated timeline toward Filipino independence than Republicans.

This meant that major changes needed to happen regarding the colonial infrastructure of the archipelago—Filipinos needed to replace US officials in the

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<sup>2</sup> This idea that Muslims and other non-Christian tribes were lower on the scale of civilization is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2. This narrative would later become internalized by Christian Filipinos who began to more universally see their Muslim counterparts as behind in development and inferior.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland: The American Government of Muslim Filipinos 1899-1920* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines System press, 1977), 257.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 89.

<sup>5</sup> McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels*, 89.

colonial government and be given greater authority in the affairs of the islands. For their part, Filipinos had to prove that they were capable of administering their own government. In addition, minority groups in the archipelago had to be acceptably “assimilated” into the main body politic in order to overcome American reservations regarding the status of these groups.

David Barrows, a professor of political science at the University of California who had served as superintendent of schools in Manila from 1900-1901, as Chief of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes of the Philippines from 1901-1903, and as Director of Education for the colony between 1903 and 1909, published *A Decade of American Government in the Philippines, 1903-1913*, an influential work read and cited by Americans and Filipinos alike. His work provides valuable insight into how Americans felt about the colonial mission to the Philippines and what the newly elected administration meant for Filipino policy.

Barrows writes that “the distinctive achievement of the American administration in the Philippines is in the social and spiritual transformation of the Filipinos themselves: the pains to make better men. American claims of contributing to the world’s experience in the governance of empire lie in the personal and political liberty guaranteed to the Filipinos and in the success of popular education.”<sup>6</sup> While his praise for the success of popular education seems self-serving given his previous experience as director of education in the archipelago, his articulation of America’s contribution to the “world’s experience” in the governance of empire [i.e. colonialism] and their ability to transform the Filipinos into “better men” is directly in line with

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<sup>6</sup> David Barrows, *A Decade of American Government in the Philippines, 1903-1913* (New York: Yonkers-on-Hudson World Book Company, 1914), 59-60.

official discourse. American colonialism was defended as serving a social mission that transformed those it touched and ironically “gave” liberty to those colonized.

This understanding of American colonialism is important because U.S. Democrats put Filipinos in semi-imperial positions of authority over predominantly Muslim regions. Barrows writes that in 1913 “the vacant parts of the Moro Province would be colonized by Filipinos and the effort made to assimilate the Moros into the Filipino nation. To the place at the head of the Executive Bureau was appointed the Attorney-General, Judge Ignacio Villamor.”<sup>7</sup> Filipinos were put in charge of the majority of the colonial infrastructure in the newly formed Department of Mindanao and Sulu and became a new colonial force in the archipelago. There was thus an internal colonization of the American colony as Filipinos, now dominant in the legislature, formulated policy in order to “assimilate” Muslims into the body politic and “civilize” them.

This was in contradiction to what Barrows recognized as the wishes of the Muslim populace. He wrote that “whatever the future of these Moro peoples, policy would seem to dictate their being left to unhampered American authority. That this, rather than Filipino government, is their own preference was sufficiently indicated by the passionate statements of several Moro datus to Secretary Dickinson on his visit to Samboanga in 1910.”<sup>8</sup> One must approach Barrows’ claim with skepticism. The statements of the datus’ may not necessarily have reflected the desires of Muslims more generally.

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<sup>7</sup> Barrows, *A Decade of American Government in the Philippines*, 65.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

Barrows' claim is still significant, however, in that it expresses American reservations concerning Filipino capacity to peacefully integrate and administer the Muslim tribes of the archipelago, which became a frequent topic in debates about the colony's independence within American political and academic circles, and speaks to the importance of Mindanao and the Muslim tribes to the formation of the Philippine nation-state. The stakes for the Filipino elite to prove their capability to administer their own affairs and assimilate their minorities were high—if they failed, not only would that possibly delay their independence, but it might also jeopardize their ability to maintain the territorial integrity of the colony as American policymakers in favor of controlling Mindanao separately would be given ammunition.

While Chapter Two focused on the role of the Muslims in the construction of Filipino national identity in the early 1900s, this chapter focuses on the period from 1913-1921 and discusses the Filipino takeover of Mindanao and the claims that the most powerful Filipino politicians, Sergio Osmeña and Manuel Quezon among them, made concerning the Province's progress—claims that reflected the perceived ability of the Filipinos to accomplish American goals better than the Americans themselves. This chapter will argue not only that Filipinos resembled a colonial power under an encouraging U.S. Democratic administration that looked favorably upon the colony's independence, but also that the progress Filipinos claimed to make was one strikingly American in appearance. This progress included the division of church and state, the expansion of education, improvements in public health, the development of resources, and the formulation of land policy. Filipinos perceived that their best chance for independence was to convince the United States that they were capable of self rule and

their best means for proving this was to model the United States. While current scholarship focuses more on American relations vis-à-vis Filipino politicians, such as Glenn May's *Social Engineering in the Philippines*, or American relations with the Muslims, such as Peter Gowing's *American Mandate in Moroland*, this chapter will bring into focus the agency of Filipinos in colonial state building in Mindanao. Since the southern regions of the Philippines had become one of the major roadblocks to Filipino independence, I will argue that Filipino elite ultimately used the Muslim regions and their inhabitants to showcase their achievements in their quest for independence.

The chapter provides a background to Filipinization and its impact on governance of Mindanao. It shows how Philippine Commission member Vicente Ilustre's 1914 Act modernized Muslim governance and discusses the impact of the Jones Bill of 1916 that replaced it. Since the Jones Bill finally brought the Muslim and non-Christian regions of the archipelago into the legislative domain of both the newly named Senate (formerly the Philippine Commission) and the House of Representatives (formerly the Philippine Assembly), Filipino Christians gained more influence in the affairs of the Muslim and non-Christian regions. I then treat the claims Filipino politicians made regarding education, public health, public works, resource development, and land policy. These claims are highlighted in a report written by *La Misión Parlamentaria Filipina*, an independence mission sent by the Philippine Legislature to the United States Congress and President in 1922. This report is valuable in seeing Filipino claims for progress made as the *Misión* was composed of the most powerful and influential politicians in the Philippine Islands,

including Sergio Osmeña (president of the House of Representatives) and Manuel Quezon (president of the Senate).

Although the Misión argues that it represents the views of the Filipino people generally, there were dissenters. Moreover, the opinion of the majority of the archipelago's inhabitants is difficult if not impossible to decipher and cannot be gleaned from this petition. However, it remains a valuable piece because it came from a large, powerful bloc of influential Filipino politicians, was addressed to and received by the United States Congress and President, and was even answered by President Harding.

By focusing on the claims of Filipino politicians, this chapter is not intended to capture the responses of the Muslims. Some saw advantage in the Filipino takeover and allied themselves with the new administration while others continued resisting. Filipinos continued to actively define their Muslim counterparts and argue that Filipinos were more suitable to administer them over Americans since they not only had the "privilege" of Western contact and Christian training, but that they shared the same racial stock with Muslims. How Filipino politicians dealt with Muslim resistance to inclusion in a Christian Filipino-led Philippines, however, is treated in more detail in Chapter Four.

#### *Background to Filipinization*

Before discussing how Filipino politicians claimed to be capable of modernizing and civilizing their Muslim counterparts, one must first understand how they went from being minor participants in colonial governance to the majority members of both houses of the legislature and the top executives in several

departments. Through a process dubbed Filipinization, which began in earnest in 1913, Filipinos assumed control of a greater percentage of the colonial infrastructure. This section will describe the impact of the transition from a Republican-dominated insular government to one dominated by U.S. Democrats who implemented the transition from American to Filipino control of the majority of government public offices.

The first significant step taken to Filipinize the government occurred with Wilson's decree that Filipinos would occupy a majority of the Philippine Commission and Assembly. Originally established by the Cooper Act of 1902, also known as the Philippine Bill of 1902, the Philippine Commission was the supreme lawmaking body of the islands and was composed entirely of appointees made by the United States President. The lower lawmaking body was composed of elected Filipino officials whose legislation was subject to approval by the Commission. Once the Wilson's decree was announced, the entire commission either resigned or was dismissed, with the exception of prominent Filipino nacionalista Rafael Palma. President Wilson then appointed the following Americans: Clinton L. Riggs, a personal friend active in Maryland politics; Henderson S. Martin of Kansas; and Winfred T. Denison, who hailed from New York City and had served as assistant attorney general in the Taft administration.<sup>9</sup>

In order to choose Filipinos suitable for appointment to the Commission, Governor-general Harrison asked Sergio Osmeña, then Speaker of the Filipino Assembly, for a list of recommendations. From the twelve provided, Harrison

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<sup>9</sup> Golay, *Face of Empire: United States-Philippine Relations, 1898-1946* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 174.

appointed Nacionalista Vicente Ilustre, a prominent revolutionary of 1896-98; nonpolitical jurist Victorino Mapa; Nacionalista Jaime de Veyra, former governor of Leyte and member of the Assembly; and Progresista Vicente Singson Encarnacion to join Rafael Palma on the Commission.<sup>10</sup> Filipinos had secured a powerful bloc in the highest legislative body of the archipelago.

Having guaranteed them control of both houses of the Legislature (the Philippine Commission and the Philippine Assembly) on the President's behalf, Harrison then embarked on a campaign to remove largely Republican-appointed bureaucratic officials and replace them with Filipinos. In addition to advancing the archipelago's autonomy, there was a significant difference in pay between salaries paid to Americans (set high as an incentive to bring American talent to the Islands) and those of Filipinos (set in line with salaries paid by local corporations), which meant a net savings to the insular government with each replacement, especially among the highest executives. Harrison's tenure was marked by what even he termed "an exodus of Americans from government service into private business."<sup>11</sup>

Certainly, his support and enforcement of a regulation put into effect in December, 1913, "absolutely prohibiting government officials and employees from engaging in private business enterprises," greatly contributed to this exodus.<sup>12</sup> Colonial policy until that time had promoted the outside business activities of colonial careerists in order to encourage development when it became clear that the flow of

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<sup>10</sup> Golay, *Face of Empire*, 175.

<sup>11</sup> Harrison, *Corner-Stone*, 84.

<sup>12</sup> Golay, *Face of Empire*, 175.



American capital and enterprise to the colony was much smaller than expected.<sup>13</sup> This was a major perk as American officials generally possessed the capital to purchase tracts of land rich in natural resources and to make investments in industries that they viewed as important to the colony's economy, such as sugar and insular mining. Such a policy, however, held the potential for abuse of power and conflicts of interest in establishing colonial law as officials could manipulate the laws to benefit their private commercial interests. The new administration thus ended a profitable practice for Americans begun towards the end of Governor-general Taft's administration. Harrison wrote that "a number of the office-holders elected to keep their business and retire from the public service. They have in general made a genuine success in business, and are now thankful for the step then taken."<sup>14</sup>

In addition to this new regulation, Harrison also cut executive salaries and held government officials accountable for safeguarding the interests of the Filipino people. Early in his term, he requested that the director of the Bureau of Lands, Charles H. Sleeper, resign since he had been responsible for the sale of large tracts of unoccupied friar lands to corporations on the grounds that this was "in contravention to the wishes of the Filipino people." He appointed Manuel Tinio, a Filipino, to fill his place. This then caused the resignation of the Assistant Director of the Bureau of Lands, an American named John R. Wilson, who stated that "he would not serve under a Filipino."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Golay, *Face of Empire*, 138.

<sup>14</sup> Harrison, *The Cornerstone*, 84.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

Filipinization cannot be entirely attributed to the efforts of Governor-General Harrison alone. The prospect of World War I lured many patriots to leave the archipelago and fight for the United States. Filipino politicians, being the primary beneficiaries of Filipinization, also contributed to the process with the passage of the Osmeña Retirement Law in 1915, which allowed officials or employees with at least six years of services to apply for retirement, which carried a gratuity based on length of service that could be as high as one year's pay. Of the 1,064 Americans eligible for payment, all but fifty applied for it.<sup>16</sup>

As Frank Golay writes, "when Harrison arrived in the Philippines, only two appointments at the level of chief or assistant chief of a bureau were held by Filipinos. When he departed in 1921, Filipinos held thirty out of the thirty-nine appointments at bureau chief rank and 'virtually all' assistant bureau chiefs were Filipinos."<sup>17</sup> Filipinization of provincial and municipal governments also occurred. By 1916, only twenty-seven Americans held positions in the provincial government (13 percent), and .66 percent in municipal government.<sup>18</sup> Although the Filipinization of the colonial government occurred in territories throughout the archipelago, governance of the Moro Province was especially affected.

#### *Modernizing Muslim Governance*

How did the Democratic administration affect the Moro Province specifically? To begin with, upon hearing that the Army had given orders to General Clarence

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<sup>16</sup> United States Congress, Senate, *The Laws of the Third Philippine Legislature during Its Fourth Session....*, 64<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1917), Act no. 2657, section 2589, 685.

<sup>17</sup> Golay, *Face of Empire*, 208.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 208.

Edwards to take over as the new governor of the province, Governor-General Harrison protested and with the support of General Pershing and the previous Governor-General, William Cameron Forbes, was able to have Edwards' orders cancelled. He then appointed Frank Carpenter as the first civilian governor of the Muslim regions, which previously had been administered under the army officers Leonard Wood, Tasker H. Bliss, and John J. Pershing. Carpenter was widely respected as an able administrator and his transition to power was smooth. Despite reductions in troop numbers, there were virtually no major Muslim uprisings during his tenure. Five days after his appointment, the Philippine Commission passed Act No. 2309, which changed the name of the Moro Province to the "Department of Mindanao and Sulu."

A civil governor in the Department of Mindanao and Sulu meant that the Filipino-controlled Commission could exercise a greater role in the territory without interference from the Army. Although supervised by United States officials, Filipinos were encouraged to take more active roles under the democratic administration.

Philippine Commission Act No. 2408, authored by the Honorable Vicente Ilustre, is the one of the earliest examples of Filipino sponsored legislation affecting the colonization of Mindanao. The full title was "An Act Providing a Temporary Form of Government for the Territory known as the Department of Mindanao and Sulu, Making Applicable Thereto, With Certain Exceptions, the Provisions of General Laws Now in Force in the Philippine Islands, and for Other Purposes." It was passed by the Commission on July 23, 1914. The Preamble, reproduced below, shows clearly that Filipinos responded to American threats to divide the colony with measures patterned after American models to better unify the archipelago:

Whereas the change of government in the Department of Mindanao and Sulu effected in January last, necessitates certain reforms, and not only is the time ripe for these reforms, but they are insistently demanded by present conditions in said Department; and

Whereas it is the desire of the people of the Islands to promote the most rapid moral, social, and political development of the inhabitants of said Department in order to accomplish their complete unification with the inhabitants of other provinces of the Archipelago; and

Whereas for the accomplishment of this purpose the extension thereto of the general laws of the country and of the general forms and procedures of government followed in other provinces, under certain limitations in harmony with the special conditions now prevailing in said Department, is among other measures advisable and necessary, but always with understanding that such limitations are temporary and that it is the firm and decided purpose of the Philippine Commission to abolish such limitations together with the departmental government as soon as the several districts of said region shall have been converted into regularly organized provinces.<sup>19</sup>

The idea that the “people of the islands,” referring to the inhabitants making up the majority of the archipelago (Christian Filipinos) would develop the Muslims and non-Christians of Mindanao and Sulu morally, socially, and politically mirrors the colonial mission of the United States taken up with all the inhabitants of the Philippines in the early 1900s. The colonial mission of the Filipinos regarding Mindanao thus has the same ideal as the sentiment of Professor Barrow’s statement—that the hallmark of Filipino-style colonialism would be the transformation of the Muslims into “better men” just as Americans had supposedly transformed the Filipinos.

Significantly, the Act also mirrors American governance in that the “development” described acts as shorthand for Western-style modernization, which included creating institutions that were secular and deprived Muslim leaders of

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<sup>19</sup> United States War Department, *Acts of the Third Philippine Legislature Third Session and of the Philippine Commission: Nos. 2402 to 2530 inclusive* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1916), Act No. 2408, 14.

traditionally held rights. The Muslim regions of the archipelago were initially organized by Philippine Commission Act No. 787, which was in force from 1903 until it was replaced by Ilustre's Act in 1914, which recognized the importance of the *datus*, or tribal leaders, with the establishment of tribal wards. *Datus* were put under the jurisdiction of the district governor and paid a stipend from the government for their services. These services included the dispensation of justice in accordance with local laws as long as the defendants were Muslim or Pagan—cases between Christian Filipinos and Muslims or Pagans would be decided by the insular Court of First Instance.

These local laws were often based on a set of written legal codes known as the *Luwaran*.<sup>20</sup> These were first translated into English by Moro expert Najeeb M. Saleeby, the appointed Superintendent of Schools in the Moro Province who had studied and become fluent in several local languages. The codes consisted of selections from customary (*adat*) law as well as selections from the Shafi'i school of Sunni Islamic law. Saleeby commented that “the Moros are not strict nor just in the execution of the law. The laws relating to murder, adultery, and inheritance are seldom strictly complied with...[and] Moro law is not applied equally to all classes. Great preference is shown to the *datu* class.”<sup>21</sup>

American colonial officials were unimpressed with these laws. General Wood, the provincial governor of the Moro Province from 1903-1906 wrote that “nothing has been found worthy of codification, and little or nothing which does not exist in better

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<sup>20</sup> Translated as “selection” by Thomas McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels*, 62.

<sup>21</sup> Najeeb M. Saleeby, *Studies in Moro History, Law, and Religion* (Manila: Department of the Interior, Ethnological Survey Publications, vol. IV, part 1, Bureau of Public Printing, 1905), 66.

form wherever humane, decent and civilized laws are in force.”<sup>22</sup> Wood was also concerned with the existence of two legal systems, local law (some mix of *adat* and Shaafi law) and the centralized laws of the insular government in Manila in the province, and in 1904 wrote that:

...a continuation of this double system constitutes a great injustice, for under the present law if a Moro kills a Filipino or Christian of a degree of intelligence and social condition in every way approximating his own—perhaps a neighbor living under exactly the same conditions—he receives the penalties prescribed by the criminal code in force in the Philippine Islands. If he kills another Moro or non-Christian under exactly the same conditions, the maximum penalty which can be awarded him under the Moro or non-Christian laws is a fine of one hundred and five pesos.<sup>23</sup>

Despite American complaints, it was not until the Philippine Commission passed the Organic Act for the Department of Mindanao and Sulu, championed by Christian Filipino Commission member Vicente Ilustre, in 1914 that Philippine general insular law was put in force and that *datus* and others who had been raised under Islamic jurisprudence and *adat* law lost their traditional places as dispensers of justice.<sup>24</sup> Their contributions to the justice system would become narrowly defined by Philippine Commission Act no. 2550, passed on April 3, 1915, which authorized the appointment of native law experts such as *kalis* (previous Moro judges—often also the *datus*) or *Panditas* (scholars in local Muslim law and jurisprudence) to serve as assessors to sit

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<sup>22</sup>Leonard Wood, *First Annual Report of Major General Leonard Wood, U.S. Army, Governor of the Moro Province* (Zamboanga: Bureau of Printing, 1904), 9, as quoted in Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland*, 129.

<sup>23</sup>Wood, *First Annual Report*, 17-18, as quoted in Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland*, 129. Wood seems unaware of the fact that this penalty of 105 pesos did not preclude retaliation from the victim’s family, relatives, and friends.

<sup>24</sup>It should be noted that Ilustre’s Act did not produce changes in the Muslim Community overnight—Muslims still went to *datus* for justice. However, the party disadvantaged by the *datu*’s decision could now bring his case to government officials. Losing the ability to decide cases between Muslims and non-Christians meant that *datus* and *panditas* also lost a source of income in the form of fines charged on the party found guilty.

with courts in the Department of Mindanao and Sulu. According to Section 3 of the Act, provided both parties were Muslims, judges “might...modify the application of laws and customs; provided that such modification shall not be in conflict with the basic principles of the laws of the United States of America.”<sup>25</sup> In practice, these modifications or exceptions to the general laws were narrowly confined to family law as occurred elsewhere in Southeast Asia, including Siam (now Thailand) and British-controlled Malaya (now called Malaysia).<sup>26</sup> Maximo M. Kalaw, a professor at the University of the Philippines-Diliman, wrote in 1919 that:

Possibly the most difficult task of the government has been the separation of the Church and State in the Moro country and the relinquishment of civil authority by the native chiefs in favor of the agents of the central government. In no other Mohammedan country has this ever been attempted. From time immemorial governmental authority has been exercised by the prelates and clergy of the Mohammedan church in Sulu, Cotabato, Lanao, a large part of Zamboanga, and in those portions of the provinces of Bukidnon and Davao which are inhabited by Mohammedans.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to changing the power structure among Muslims that had traditionally been the agents of dispensing justice, the Act placed more power in the hands of the provincial governor by reclassifying the tribal wards as municipal districts. The municipal districts have been described by Philippine Muslim historian Peter Gowing as a “rudimentary form of government (a skeleton of municipal government) designed to meet the needs of those areas where the majority of the inhabitants had not developed a sufficient degree of political sophistication desired by

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<sup>25</sup> M.B. Hooker, *Islamic Law in South-East Asia* (Singapore, New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 229.

<sup>26</sup> Mohd. Musib M. Buat, “Legal Anchors,” *In Search of Commonalities between Muslims and Christian Filipinos* (Manila: Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication, 2002), ed. Florangel Rosario-Braid, 110.

<sup>27</sup> Maximo Kalaw, *Self-Government in the Philippines* (New York: The Century Co., 1919), 121.

the Government.”<sup>28</sup> The municipal district had a president, vice-president, and councils for advisory purposes. All of these officials were appointed by the Provincial Governor who was under no obligation to choose *datus* for these positions.

As provincial governor, Frank Carpenter followed a policy of Filipinization similar to that of Harrison. Previous Governor-General W. Cameron Forbes wrote that:

Carpenter actually preferred American-trained Filipino officials because of the difficulty of retaining high-class Americans who had a competent knowledge of local dialects and customs. He saw that there was an unlimited supply of young Filipinos available for training whereas it was hard to attract and hold enough desirable Americans for public service in the Philippines.... Moreover, the replacement of the unfit or incompetent Filipino was easier and involved less economic loss than in the case of an American.<sup>29</sup>

He thus appointed Filipinos to many of the executive posts of the Moro Province, appointing only a tiny number of Muslims to serve alongside them, prompting many Muslims to call for “Moroization” and even send letters pleading for the former American administrators to return to them.<sup>30</sup>

The act that Ilustre authored demonstrates that Filipinos were responding to American threats by changing the governance of Mindanao in ways that mimicked American views on what constituted more progressive, modern forms of government. This included creating a more unified, secular justice system in response to criticism made by prominent American officials, including previous Provincial Governor General Wood. By demoting *datus* and others from judges to merely consultants on local customs regarding family law (such as marriage, inheritance, and the divorce),

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<sup>28</sup> Gowing, *Moro Province*, 263.

<sup>29</sup> W. Cameron Forbes, *The Philippine Islands* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), vol II, 33.

<sup>30</sup> The ways in which Filipinos dealt with such resistance will be discussed in chapter 4.



the act also changed the political currency of *datus* and *panditas* schooled in Islamic law since their expertise was now much more narrowly confined. Their role as authorities in deciding cases between Muslims and non-Christians changed, and general insular law became enforced.

### *Jones Law*

Ilustre's Act was succeeded by the passage of the Jones Law of 1916 by the United States Congress, which had a tremendous effect on legislative control of the Muslim and other non-Christian regions of the archipelago. The law was formally titled "An Act to Declare the Purpose of the People of the United States to the Future Political Status of the People of the Philippine Islands, and to Provide a More Autonomous Government for Those Islands."<sup>31</sup> It abolished the Philippine Commission and Assembly and replaced them with a bicameral Philippine Legislature to be completely composed of Filipinos. The Act fully incorporated the provinces inhabited by Muslims and other non-Christians into the nation-state, thus eliminating any difference in legislative control over the two territories. The preamble of the act was particularly important to Filipino politicians. It stated that:

...it was never the intention of the people of the United States in the incipency of the War with Spain to make it a war of conquest or for territorial aggrandizement; and  
...it is, as it has always been, the purpose of the people of the United States to withdraw their sovereignty over the Philippine Islands and to recognize their independence as soon as a stable government can be established therein; and  
...for the speedy accomplishment of such purpose it is desirable to place in the hands of the people of the Philippines as large a control of their domestic affairs as can be given them without, in the meantime, impairing the exercise of the rights of sovereignty by the people of the United States, in order that, by

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<sup>31</sup> U.S. Bureau of Insular Affairs, *Philippine Islands : Public Land Laws of the Philippine Islands, in Force and Effect July 1, 1920 ...; Land Laws of the Philippine Islands*, ed. Philippine Legislature (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1920), 33.

the use and exercise of popular franchise and governmental powers, they may be the better prepared to fully assume the responsibilities and enjoy all the privileges of complete independence....<sup>32</sup>

The act reinforced the idea that Filipino policymakers had to prove that a stable government had already been established in the archipelago. This included proof that the Muslims and other non-Christian tribes had been assimilated into the body politic. In order to facilitate this, the Department of Mindanao and Sulu became part of the 12<sup>th</sup> senate district of the archipelago, which included the Mountain Province (an area in Luzon inhabited by a non-Christian majority), Baguio, and Nueva Vizcaya. While the grouping of the other regions in the Philippines into 11 districts was due to geography given their close proximity to each other, the grouping of the regions in the 12<sup>th</sup> district owed more to political reasons—the territories were not only not contiguous but quite varied in terms of resources and topography. Two senators were to represent the entire district—such a grouping disadvantaged both the Muslim and other non-Christian groups as their representation in the Philippine Legislature was shared even though their interests may not have been.

The Act also established a Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes, which Filipino lawmakers placed under the administration of the Secretary of the Interior, Vicente Ilustre, with the passage of Philippine Legislature Act no. 2674.

This act empowered the Bureau to:

foster by all adequate means in a systematic, rapid, and complete manner the moral, material, economic, social, and political development of the regions inhabited by non-Christian Filipinos, always having in view the action of rendering permanent the mutual intelligence between and complete fusion of

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<sup>32</sup> U.S. Bureau of Insular Affairs, *Philippine Islands: Public Land Laws*, 33.

all the Christian and non-Christian elements populating the Provinces of the Archipelago.<sup>33</sup>

While the election of Senators and representatives in other parts of the archipelago would be by popular suffrage, in the Muslim and non-Christian regions aforementioned, they were appointed by the Governor-general. This insured that they would be sympathetic with American political goals in the islands.

The passage of the Jones Law and the creation of the Philippine Senate—to be composed of elected members rather than the appointed members that formerly formed the Philippine Commission—and the House of Representatives created opportunities for both Manuel Quezon and Sergio Osmeña. Manuel Quezon resigned from his post as Resident Commissioner to the United States and returned to the archipelago where he successfully ran for election to the Senate and was then elected Senate President. Sergio Osmeña decided to remain in the lower legislative body where he became Speaker of the House.

### *World War I*

American involvement in the archipelago's affairs would lessen soon after the Jones Law due to the advent of United States participation in World War I. Philippine historian Bernardita Churchill stated that “[Governor-General] Harrison’s freedom of action in the administration of the Philippines was almost total, especially after 1917 when American entry into World War I resulted in the Administration’s absorption in

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<sup>33</sup>U.S. Bureau of Insular Affairs, *Acts of the Philippine Legislature: Philippines; Laws of the Fourth Philippine Legislature...*, 65<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2d sess., Senate Executive Document 124 (Washington, DC: government Printing Office, 1918), 129.

more pressing matters than those of the far away colonial government.”<sup>34</sup> As already discussed, Harrison was a firm believer in letting Filipinos run their own affairs; just as Harrison enjoyed greater freedom in office, so too did Filipino politicians.

Reflecting on the war and the policy adopted by Filipinos to “bring Filipinos and Moros into friendly relationship, in order to bring about mutual assimilation,” Director of the Philippine Press Bureau Vicente Bunuan wrote in 1927 that:

So successful was this policy of bringing the two peoples into brotherly relationship that when America entered the World War in 1917 it was not considered dangerous to withdraw not only the American soldiers stationed there but also the Philippine Scout garrisons with the exception of one battalion stationed at Petit Barracks at Zamboanga. This is what the Filipinos can do if they are allowed to handle the Moro question unhampered; that is what they will do when they become independent in dealing with the Moro problem.”<sup>35</sup>

The claims that Filipino politicians made concerning the assimilation of the Muslims and other non-Christian tribes from roughly 1914 to 1921 can be seen in *Nuestra Demanda de la Libertad*, co-authored by members of *La Misión Parlamentaria Filipino* in 1922—after the election of Republican Warren G. Harding to the US Presidency. The work is significant to Philippine historiography in several ways. To begin with, *La Misión* was composed of several prominent politicians, including Manuel Quezon (president of the Philippine Senate and appointed president of the Mission) and five other senators; Sergio Osmeña (Speaker of the Philippine House) and 8 other Representatives; Secretary of the Interior Teodoro M. Kalaw; Director of Lands Jorge Vargas; four professors from the University of the

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<sup>34</sup> Bernardita Reyes Churchill, *The Independence Missions to the United States, 1919-1934* (Manila: National Historical Institute, 1983), 7-8.

<sup>35</sup> Vicente G. Bunuan, *Democracy in the Philippines*, (Washington DC: Philippine Press Bureau, 1927), 28. Bunuan was director of the Philippine Press Bureau, Washington Office of the Philippine Commission of Independence.

Philippines, and several others. The members of the *Misión* were appointed by a joint committee that had been created as a response to the change in American administration and the publication of the Wood-Forbes Report, which pointed out mistakes of the Harrison Administration, including the inadequate treatment and care of cultural minorities.<sup>36</sup> The *Misión* was tasked to work for Philippine independence and to present the Filipino view regarding issues affecting the archipelago. The fact that the *Misión* was received by President Harding, and their memorial addressed to the United States Congress and President was answered by Harding proves that the memorial was influential and had an important audience. An entire section of the report focuses on the Muslim and non-Christian tribes, which is especially relevant to this study.

### *Education*

The *Misión* memorial's treatment of education reveals how Filipinos attempted to prove that they were capable of self-governance based on their ability to educate and civilize peoples they considered inferior. According to the memorial:

The progress realized since the establishment of the civil administration [in 1913] have been so great that one would need several pages to enumerate them in a detailed fashion. As concerns labor, the Christian Filipinos have sacrificed men and money in order to civilize their non-Christian brothers and elevate them to his own level.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Bernardita Reyes Churchill, *The Independence Missions to the United States, 1919-1934* (Manila: National Historical Institute, 1983), 35-37.

<sup>37</sup> Manuel Quezon, Sergio Osmeña and the Philippines Parliamentary Mission to the United States, 1922. *Nuestra demanda de libertad: memorial Filipino al presidente y congreso de los Estados Unidos: resumen del problema Filipino y exposición de las actuales condiciones de las islas* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1923), 127. The original reads: *Los progresos realizados desde el establecimiento de la administración civil han sido realmente tan grandes que necesitarían muchas páginas para enumerarlos detalladamente. En aras de esta labor, los filipinos cristianos han sacrificado hombres y dinero para civilizar a sus hermanos no cristianos y elevarlos a su propio nivel.* My translation. All translations are mine unless stated otherwise.

The authors here highlight the sacrifice Filipinos have made to educate their brothers. They continue by citing statistics in order to demonstrate “the progress reached in the non-Christian regions [including the Muslim regions] in Mindanao and Sulu since control of the government was given to Christian Filipinos.”<sup>38</sup> They then present a table demonstrating this progress, reproduced below.<sup>39</sup>

1) Number of Schools, Teachers, and Enrolled Students in the Department of  
Mindanao and Sulu by Year, 1914-1921

Year (Año)	Number of Schools in Operation (Número de escuelas en función)	Number of Teachers (Número de maestros)	Enrolled Students (Matriculados)
1914	157	311	14800
1915	180	373	16019
1916	A*	A*	A* <sup>40</sup>
1917	292	613	25167
1918	372	772	32438
1919	468	1049	41179
1920	606	1261	53096
1921	690	1452	61187

Now, one should be careful to not read the number of students matriculated as the number of Muslims and non-Christians enrolled because:

In the beginning, the old Mahommedan chiefs and panditas openly announced that they were against their children attending government schools, considering this measure as an infraction of the agreement that the government sealed with them as concerning their religion, habits, and customs. However, this difficulty was resolved in an entirely satisfactory manner thanks to the tact of the education authorities and the cooperation of the provincial, municipal, and other interested authorities.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Quezon, *Nuestra Demanda*, 125. Original reads: *el progreso alcanzado en la porción no cristiana de Mindanao y Sulú desde que se dio el control del gobierno a los filipinos cristianos.*

<sup>39</sup> Quezon, *Nuestra Demanda*, 125.

<sup>40</sup> No explanation is provided for the missing data for 1916.

<sup>41</sup> Quezon, *Nuestra Demanda*, 126. The original reads: *Al principio los viejos jefes y panditas mahometanos se pronunciaron abiertamente en contra de la asistencia de sus hijos a las escuelas del gobierno, considerando esta medida como una infracción del convenio que el gobierno celebrara con*

When colonial schools were established, many of the students were actually Christians whose parents had more faith in the institutions than their Muslim counterparts.

However, the report does specifically mention the increased enrollment in the later years, stating that “one calls attention to the fact that the matriculated students in 1913 were almost all Christians, while the notable increase in 1921 represents an increase in the number of matriculated Mahommedans and Pagans.”<sup>42</sup>

The fact that this information appears in a report whose express purpose was to demand liberty from the United States Congress and President attests to the fact that Filipino politicians perceived that educating and civilizing “their” minorities would prove their capacity to be autonomous, especially since they could draw comparisons to what the Filipinos were able to accomplish versus what Americans had accomplished during U.S. Army rule. Following this line of reasoning, Filipinos omitted the fact that the Secretary of Public Instruction was still an American and instead took credit themselves for increases in enrollment. The majority of teachers were, after all, Filipinos, and it was largely the Filipino authorities that the report cites as being able to pacify Muslim fears and thus increase the enrollment of Mohammedans<sup>43</sup> and other non-Christians.

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*ellos en lo tocante a su religión, hábitos y costumbres. Sin embargo, esta dificultad se solucionó de modo enteramente satisfactorio gracias al tacto de las autoridades del ramo educativo y a la cooperación de las autoridades provinciales y municipales y otras autoridades interesadas.*

<sup>42</sup> *Nuestra Demanda*, 126. Original reads: *se llama la atención al hecho de que los estudiantes matriculados en 1913 eran casi todos cristianos, mientras que el notable aumento de 1921 representa un incremento en el número de niños mahometanos y paganos matriculados.*

<sup>43</sup> One should pay close attention to the terms that the report uses to refer to the Islamized Filipinos: *moro* is notably absent, while the more politically correct term of *mahometanos* is used.

Attention should also be paid to the type of training that the Muslims and non-Christians received. In his doctoral dissertation to the faculty of the State University of Iowa in 1920, Filipino Victoriano D. Diamonon wrote that the:

The purpose of the government is to extend to them civilizing opportunities which will ultimately bring about complete fusion with their Christian brothers. Efforts have been directed to public education.... The education extended to the non-Christian tribes is...vocational. In the primary grades the pupils are trained in agriculture, and schools along the coast place emphasis upon the development of marine products, not only sea foods but industry in shells, pearls, and sponges.... The government has even done more than merely extend the ordinary curricula to the non-Christian tribes. *It is investigating the talents of these peoples with a view to developing them.* Recently scholarships have been established in household industries, in nursing, in agriculture, in arts, and in trade and commerce. *The uncivilized peoples have broken down the barriers of the centuries and have gone forth even to the United States in search of further training. The Philippine government is making a permanent investment which insures profit by encouraging these young people to prepare themselves to serve their own people.*<sup>44</sup> [Emphasis added]

This passage from Diamonon is significant in that it positions the Filipino government as an entity capable of discovering talents unknown to the uncivilized Muslim people and developing them. The fact that some privileged Muslims were able to make the costly journey to the United States to undergo further educational training is portrayed as representing a breakthrough in the “barriers of centuries”—a breakthrough that the Filipino government is able to produce. Diamonon also cites the education of the Muslims as a permanent investment that the Filipino government is making because it is encouraging young Muslims to prepare themselves to serve their own people. Muslims are becoming “better men” through the educational system run by the Philippine government much as the Americans were able to transform the Filipinos

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<sup>44</sup> Victoriano D. Diamonon, *The Development of Self-Government in the Philippine Islands* (Iowa City: Iowa, 1920), 110.



themselves into “better men” according to Barrows. The fact that this was accepted by Diamanon’s dissertation committee speaks to the degree to which this rhetoric was accepted among America’s academic community.

To appreciate the degree to which Filipinos perceived education to be important to their claims for independence, one must only look at the Wood-Forbes Mission, which was sent to the Philippines after the election of Republican President Warren G. Harding and published their report in 1921. The following excerpt from the report is particularly illuminating:

Public order is excellent throughout the islands, with the exception of minor disturbances in the Moro regions, due principally to energetic and sometimes overzealous efforts to hasten the placing of Moro children, especially girls, in the public schools, and to the too sudden imposition upon the disarmed Mohammedans of what amounts to an absolute control by Christian Filipinos. It is also due in part to failure to give adequate representation to local governments to Moros.<sup>45</sup>

It would appear that the “tact” referred to by the Filipino politicians in *Nuestra Demanda de Libertad* included the seeming coercion to place Muslim children in schools, Muslim girls in particular. Such practices suggest that Filipino politicians engaged in unethical practices to increase the number of matriculated students that they could report the United States. Given that American colonial officials attached so much significance to education, Filipinos in power knew that this would be an important barometer by which their success at “civilizing” (or colonizing) the Muslims

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<sup>45</sup> Report of the Special Mission on Investigation to the Philippine Islands to the Secretary of War, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1921, 24.

would be measured.<sup>46</sup> Their capacity to do this, in turn, would prove their own abilities at self-government and autonomy.

Like the American colonizers before it, the Filipino government invested money in education as a means of assimilating the Muslim and non-Christian populations. The number of schools established, teachers recruited, and students enrolled were used as proof to show that they were ready for independence—just as similar data was used by the American administration to prove that they were transforming the Filipinos into “better men.” Highly educated Filipinos like Diamanon perceived Filipino-led government schools as capable of discovering talents in Muslims that Muslims were unaware they possessed and as capable of developing them. However, the Wood-Forbes Report gives us valuable perspective of what this may have looked like on the ground with its description of unrest and of “overzealous” efforts to place Moro children, especially girls, in Filipino schools, presumably against their will.

### *Public Health*

Just as Filipino politicians used education of the Muslims and non-Christian tribes to prove their capacity for self-government, so too did they draw attention to their efforts regarding public health in Mindanao. Research regarding public health in the Philippines has largely glossed over public health efforts among the Muslims. Warwick Anderson, for example, justifies this exclusion in *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines*, by stating that

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<sup>46</sup> For more on education in the Christian regions of the Philippines, see Glen Anthony May, *Social Engineering in the Philippines*. May omits education in the Moro province of the Philippines.

“the so-called non-Christian tribes were regarded as irredeemable and therefore the province of anthropology, not medicine.”<sup>47</sup>

Philippine specialist Frank Golay commented that:

Filipino leaders were aware that in the eyes of many Americans their claims to greater government autonomy were flawed by their lack of experience in dealing with public health problems, and...the legislature had authorized the reorganization of the insular Public Health Service and transferred it to the Department of the Interior headed by Rafael Palma.<sup>48</sup>

Filipino politicians devoted money to improve the public health of the Muslim and other non-Christian regions of the archipelago, most likely out of a desire to not only showcase their abilities for autonomy but also to implement beneficial health reforms for the Muslims. Whether motivated by political and/or charitable reasons, Filipino politicians made sure to highlight their accomplishments in their report to the United States. They stated that:

Great progress has been realized in the service of sanitation and health with the establishment of new hospitals and dispensaries, the first under the immediate direction of doctors and qualified surgeons, and then the later ones under the direction of graduated nurses and practitioners.<sup>49</sup>

These establishments were considered successes not only for the improvements in health. Indeed:

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<sup>47</sup> Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 238. Despite this exclusion, Anderson’s work is admirable and significant to our understanding of the interplay between the practice of colonialism and that of medicine in the Philippines. His discussion of the racialization of germ theories which contrasted “a clean, ascetic American body with an open, polluting Filipino body” is fascinating, and, hopefully, he will write about public health imperialism in the Muslim regions of the archipelago in more detail in the future.

<sup>48</sup> Golay, *Face of Empire*, 208

<sup>49</sup> *Nuestra Demanda de Libertad*, 128. Original reads: *En el servicio de sanidad se han realizado progresos halagüeños con el establecimiento de nuevos hospitales y dispensarios, los primeros bajo la dirección inmediata de médicos y cirujanos cualificados, y los últimos bajo la dirección de enfermeras graduadas y de practicantes.*

The importance and value of the work realized by personal health and sanitation during the last years cannot be exaggerated if one looks not only from the point of view of the medical treatment that it facilitates, but rather from other points of view of no lesser importance, especially that of the establishment of control and amiable relations between the government and the Mohammedan and Pagan population.<sup>50</sup>

The *Misión* highlighted the presence of women at such establishments in order to vouch for the Muslims' acceptance of these institutions:

In the beginning, the Mahommedans and Pagans were suspicious and were resisting going to the hospitals for their medical treatment; but this attitude was transformed rapidly into a sense of acceptance and appreciation for the facilities provided for in the hospitals, even to the surprising extent that women from good families today request to be admitted in such establishments.<sup>51</sup>

No statistics are provided to attest to the frequency of visiting patients or the number of dispensations issued. One can suspect, however, that the reaction among the populace to the advent of Western medicine in the region, was not universal acceptance as reliance on traditional healers and methods for resolving health issues continues even to the present day.

### *Public Works*

Along with improving the governance of Mindanao, increasing the enrollment of the Muslims and the other non-Christian tribes in school, and establishing hospitals and dispensaries, Filipino politicians also funded public works in non-Christian areas and referenced these in their demands for independence. The *Misión* wrote that:

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<sup>50</sup> *Nuestra Demanda de Libertad*, 128. Original reads: *La importancia y valor de la obra realizada por el personal de sanidad durante los últimos años no pueden ser exagerados si se mira no solamente desde el punto de vista del tratamiento médico que se facilita, sino desde otros puntos de vista de no menor importancia, especialmente el del establecimiento del control y relaciones amistosas del gobierno con la población mahometana y pagana.*

<sup>51</sup> *Nuestra Demanda de Libertad*, 128. Original reads: *Al principio los mahometanos y paganos andaban recelosos y se resistían a ingresar en los hospitales para su tratamiento médico; pero esta actitud se transformó rápidamente en un sentimiento de aceptación y aprecio de las facilidades proporcionadas en los hospitales, hasta el extremo sorprendente de que mujeres de buenas familias solicitan hoy ser admitidas en dichos establecimiento.*

Referring to permanent improvements and public works, one can see that the construction of good highways and paths, the supply of potable water, the improvements of ports and the ease of loading and unloading, the installation of telephones, and the construction of public buildings have been given special attention...despite the inadequacy of local rents and the insufficient help of the insular government.<sup>52</sup>

The insular government here refers to the office of the Governor-general and the American colonial officials—the fact that the report describes their help as insufficient highlights how much credit the report’s authors thought due to Filipino legislators for the progress made in the establishment of public works in the Muslim and non-Christian regions of the archipelago. Mentioning the inadequacy of local rents suggests that the Filipino politicians that authored the bill wanted to make sure that the audience of the petition (the President and the Congress of the United States) understood that it was through the investment of the colony’s highest level of government that such works were realized. Christian Filipinos took charge of building public works characteristic of “civilized” countries, such as potable water and telephones, over a population with different cultures and values much in the same way as had the United States (and Spain previously although to a lesser extent) in years prior.

#### *Agricultural Development and Colonial Migration*

Aside from reforming Muslim governance, educating the Muslim and pagan populations, investing in the region’s public health, and constructing public works,

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<sup>52</sup> *Nuestra Demanda*, 127. Original reads: *En lo referente a mejoras permanentes y obras públicas, se puede decir que han recibido especial atención la construcción de buenas carreteras y veredas, el suministro de agua potable, las mejoras de puertos y las facilidades de carga y descarga, la instalación de teléfonos y la construcción de edificios públicos. El siguiente cuadro demuestra el progreso realizado en este sentido, no obstante lo inadecuado de las rentas locales y la insuficiente ayuda del gobierno insular.*

Filipinos also used the Muslims and Mindanao to prove their capacity for

“developing” the region’s resources. According to the *Misión*:

Regarding agriculture, we have spent special attention to the cultivation of food products. We have established agricultural colonies in Cotabato in order to unite the Christian Filipinos and Mohammedans and to increase the production of rice and other foodstuffs.<sup>53</sup>

The report also goes on to detail the number of hectares cultivated and the particular food grown. This included rice, corn, coconuts, peanuts, and sweet potatoes.

However, the total area cultivated actually decreased from 1915 to 1921, which is explained as a result of failed harvests due to floods and locusts.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, the

production of certain foodstuffs also decreased, including rice, peanuts, and sweet potatoes. If the table shows such unimpressive results, why bother to include them?

Despite the attention paid to the two agricultural products that experienced an increase in cultivation—corn and coconuts—the decreases seem only to demonstrate the challenges Filipinos faced in increasing food productivity and demonstrating their capabilities. The inclusion of these results most likely speaks to the writers’

awareness of the expectations of their audience—if they had left out the chart recording progress on their attempts at agricultural development, this would be a glaring omission and were compelled to include it. This is one example of how the expectations of the United States government preconfigured the ways in which

Filipinos requested their independence—and suggests that the colonial actions regarding the Muslims and the non-Christian tribes on the part of Filipino lawmakers

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<sup>53</sup>*Nuestra Demanda*, 126. Original reads: *En punto a agricultura se ha prestado especial atención al cultivo de productos alimenticios. Se han establecido colonias agrícolas en Cotabato para unir a los filipinos cristianos y mahometanos y aumentar la producción del arroz y de otros alimentos.*

<sup>54</sup>*Nuestra Demanda*, 126.

were also heavily influenced by their perception of what Americans would approve of and label “progress.”

In order to improve the Department of Mindanao and Sulu’s agricultural output and develop the resources of the regions, the government also needed to increase the laborers willing to do the work. Christian Filipinos were encouraged by the government to move south to find work and resettle, especially those in heavily populated areas. In fact, “in 1917 the Philippine government passed an appropriation of 100,000 pesos to aid such inhabitants of Luzon and the Visayas who might desire to immigrate to the southern islands either to acquire land or seek employment.”<sup>55</sup>

The *Misión* gives us an idea of how many people moved with government encouragement. They explicitly list the number of “colonists, including men, women, and children” (*número de colonos incluyendo hombres, mujeres y niños*) that moved to Cotabato (one region of the Department of Mindanao and Sulu) for the years 1915, 1917, 1919, 1920, and 1921. This number totaled comes out to 16,458 colonists resettled due to government encouragement. The total number of Christian migrants to the rest of the Muslim regions in Mindanao, however, puts this figure higher given certain pull factors in the region, such as expanding economic opportunities, the availability of cheap land, the growth of industry, and the favorable climate.

According to the *Misión*, one result worthy of mention:

...has been the great success obtained in the relief procured upon the densely populated provinces like Cebu and both Ilocos [Ilocos del sur and del norte—two provinces located in the north of Luzon]. The population excess of these provinces has been moved to the unpopulated regions of the province of Cotabato, rich in potential, where they have found ample room to unwind and

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<sup>55</sup> Diamanon, *Development of Self-Government in the Philippine Islands*, 110.

satisfy their legitimate ambition to be landowners and to find better recompense for their work.<sup>56</sup>

This is one of the clearest examples of colonial behavior on the part of Christian Filipinos to address the problems the colony had with land reform. The difficulty of average Filipinos to acquire land in certain parts of the islands was also continually noted by American policymakers as a serious problem to Filipino autonomy. Looked at from this angle, the *legítima ambición* (legitimate ambition) that the Misión referenced shares remarkable similarities to the American Dream, except that Filipino policymakers were positioning themselves as the agents that made this dream come true for Filipino citizens where the Americans before could not.

Diamanon opined that “this program will not only develop the resources of the south but will bring the two elements of Filipino people together as they never have been before and will thus abolish the tribal differences which have existed for ages.”<sup>57</sup> This settlement of the southern provinces was colonialism with the intent to assimilate the Muslim populations into the body politic. Filipino policymakers and others seemed to tout the idea of assimilation as the motivation for their actions while profiting from the region’s resources. Diamanon noted that:

The action of the government in encouraging immigration to Mindanao is indeed laudable and should command support. The island itself, second in size to Luzon, can produce sufficient food stuffs to supply the whole of the Philippines and export besides. Forest and marine products abound, but how

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<sup>56</sup> *Nuestra Demanda*, 127. Original reads: “*ha sido el buen éxito obtenido en el alivio procurado a las provincias densamente pobladas como Cebú y ambos Ilocos [del sur y del norte]. El exceso de población de estas provincias se ha trasladado a las despobladas regiones de la provincia de Cotabato, ricas en potencia, donde han encontrado amplio campo para desenvolverse y satisfacer su legítima ambición de ser propietarios de terrenos y de hallar mejor recompensa a su trabajo.*”

<sup>57</sup> Diamanon, 110. The continual waves of migrant Filipinos into what was once majority Muslim Mindanao were often met with antagonism and resentment on the part of Muslims. See Patricio Abinales, *Making Mindanao : Cotabato and Davao in the Formation of the Philippine Nation-State* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2000).



could these be utilized if the Mohammedan population were bitter foes to the Filipinos?”<sup>58</sup>

Diamanon emphasizes the stakes—Filipino politicians recognized the importance of Mindanao and its resources to the archipelago as a whole. While the Muslim and non-Christian tribes provided the Filipinos with an opportunity to showcase their capabilities at building an educational system and civilizing their counterparts much in the same way Americans had done with the Christian Filipinos themselves, the land and resources of Mindanao were lauded as solutions to the overcrowding in certain parts of the islands, dependencies on other countries for food staples (including rice), and concerns regarding economic development.

### *Conclusion*

With the Filipinization of the archipelago’s governance, the encouragement of the American Democratic administration, the passage of the Jones Bill in 1916, and the outbreak of World War I, Filipino politicians became the dominant players in Philippine affairs. Despite being “colonized” themselves, they were put in power over minority groups in the archipelago considered less civilized and whose resources they coveted. The ways they formulated policy and the claims they made to progress were colonial in character and American in appearance.

Philippine Commission member Vicente Ilustre’s Bill in 1914 extended the general laws of the rest of the archipelago over the Muslim regions, creating a secular justice system that more closely resembled that of the United States. In addition to changes in governance, Filipinos tried to prove their capacity for autonomy by showing that similar to what Americans claimed to have done before them, they too

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<sup>58</sup> Diamanon, 112.

could claim to educate other peoples and “investigate” their talents “with a view to developing them.”<sup>59</sup> They took charge of improving public health in the Muslim and non-Christian provinces by building the institutions of “modern” medicine, including hospitals and dispensaries; acceptance of Western medicine was vouched for by the fact that women of the “best” families went to receive treatment. Filipinos invested in constructing public works characteristic of “civilized” countries, such as the establishment of telephone lines and potable water. They also posited that they could develop and increase the agricultural output of Mindanao and, in a clear display of colonialism, encouraged the migration of Christian Filipinos to Muslim areas of Mindanao, which they defended as a mechanism for bringing Christians and Muslims together and abolishing the differences between them.

Democratic control of the United States Congress and Presidency afforded Filipino politicians unprecedented opportunities in formulating policy and “developing” the regions of the Muslim South. The progress that they made was touted as proof of their capacity to be autonomous. In the words of prominent Filipinos like Camilo Osias, former director of education, “it remained for the period when the Filipino people and Filipino officials had better control of their own affairs and of the non-Christian people to achieve the greatest work of uplift and of progress ever accomplished in the non-Christian territory and for the non-Christian people of the Philippines.”<sup>60</sup> Osias continued, stating that “one of the great achievements of the Filipinos in the last few years is found in the great work of uplift and nationalization

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<sup>59</sup> Diamonon, 110.

<sup>60</sup> Manuel Luis Quezon and Camilo Osias, *Governor-General Wood and the Filipino Cause* (Manila: Manila Book Company, 1924), 43.

of our Non-Christian brethren.”<sup>61</sup> The Filipino elite used the progress of the Moro tribes as a measurement of their own accomplishments.

Their bid for independence, however, was ultimately frustrated by Republican control of Congress and the Presidency. Republicans pointed to the deficiencies of the colonial government, including the lack of sufficient press coverage to insure a sound public opinion, financial mistakes, delays in the administration of justice, the need for better teachers in both lower and higher institutes of learning, and “inadequate treatment and care of cultural minorities.”<sup>62</sup> The appointment of Governor-General Leonard Wood, in particular, proved problematic given his first hand experience in the Philippines as Governor of the Moro Province and the attention he paid to Muslim reservations regarding Filipino assimilation. The protests of Muslims and how Filipinos dealt with them will be addressed in Chapter 4.

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<sup>61</sup> Quezon, *Governor-General Wood*, 82, 83.

<sup>62</sup> Churchill, *The Philippine Independence Missions to the United States 1919-1934*, 7.

## CHAPTER 4

### COLONIAL MOCKERY

Mr. Speaker, the problem of governing the *Moros* and other non-Christian inhabitants of the Philippines is no way as serious as the issue of governing the Indians that the Americans found here in the first days of the Republic, and if the Filipinos were given the opportunity to take into their care their backwards brothers, they would show that this task [governing the Muslims] would not even be considered a problem. In my opinion, there is less basis for suggesting that Muslim and non-Christian Filipinos be excluded from the control of the Philippine legislature than there is to suggest that the Indians of this country be excluded from the control of Congress, given that there is a greater commonality of interests and race between Christian and non-Christian Filipinos, on the one hand, than between Indian Americans and white Americans on the other.<sup>1</sup>

On October 12, 1914, Manuel Quezon, Filipino statesman and resident commissioner,<sup>2</sup> argued with Senator Towner from Iowa who had suggested that a bill allowing for greater Filipino autonomy be amended so that it would exempt the Muslim and other non-Christian regions of the archipelago from Filipino political control.<sup>3</sup> American politicians like Towner were aware of the tension that existed between Muslim tribes in the archipelago and their Christian counterparts, and were still debating a more distinct, separate administration for the Muslim regions. The

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<sup>1</sup>Manuel Luis Quezon, *Discursos Del Hon. Manuel L. Quezon, Comisionado Residente de Filipinas, pronunciados en la cámara de representantes de los Estados Unidos con motivo de la discusión del bill Jones...* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1915), ed. William Atkinson Jones, 130-131, my translation. The source text reads:

Sr. Presidente, el problema de gobernar a los moros y otros habitantes infieles de Filipinas no es en modo alguno un asunto tan serio como la cuestión de gobernar a los indios que los americanos encontraron aquí en los primeros días de la República, y si a los filipinos cristianos se les diese la oportunidad de tomar a su cuidado a sus hermanos atrasados demostrarían que la tarea ni siquiera debería llamarse problema. En mi opinión, hay menos fundamento para sugerir que los filipinos infieles sean excluido del control de la Legislatura Filipina que el que habría para sugerir que los indios de este país sean excluidos del control del Congreso, puesto que hay más comunidad de intereses y de raza entre los filipinos cristianos y los infieles, de una parte, que entre los indios americanos y los americanos blancos, de otra.

<sup>2</sup> Manuel Quezon would later become the first President of a semi-autonomous Philippine government in the early 1930s.

<sup>3</sup> The bill referred to here is the Jones Bill, which will be discussed in further detail later in the chapter.

Filipino elite, however, challenged American arguments regarding the direction of the colony, drawing uncomfortable comparisons using their knowledge of American history. Like Quezon, they were quick to point out the colonial contradictions involved in American views on what the Philippines should look like—as these views were often based on idealized visions of the United States.

In drawing a comparison between the Muslims of the Philippines and the *indios* (Native Americans), Quezon implicitly pointed out the hypocrisy of the idea that the Muslims should be outside the control of the Philippine legislature, or administered separately from the rest of the colony—after all, the United States exercised sovereignty over Native American tribes that were culturally distinct. Quezon used the Muslims to conceptually connect marginalized tribes of the archipelago with those in the United States, and positioned the Catholic Filipinos on a level with white (Protestant) Americans in the process.

His mention of a greater commonality of race between Filipinos and the Muslim and other non-Christian tribes than that which existed between White and indigenous Americans speaks to a larger strategy that Filipino politicians used to maintain the territorial integrity of the archipelago and to be granted greater autonomy. To begin with, such a move treats Christian Filipinos and Muslims as a monolithic, essentialized entity, expunging differences in geographic origin, language, profession, and class. By stating that Christian and Muslim Filipinos have a particular racial stock in common, Quezon and other Christian contemporaries from the archipelago de-emphasize differences among the Muslim, non-Christian, and Christianized peoples of the islands.

While Chapter 3 argued that elite Filipinos in effect became colonizers of Muslim Mindanao by asserting hierarchical difference between Christianized Filipinos and Muslims, this chapter will argue that just as they mimicked American colonialism, so too did they mock it by subverting US political and colonial ideology in order to challenge the American role as trustees in the training of Filipinos in democracy and self-governance. Through an analysis of discourse related to independence made by important political figures of the era, namely Manuel Quezon, Camilo Osias, Vicente Bunuan, and Jose Melencio, I show how the elite largely denied and sidestepped the Muslim reservations and resistance that were cited by Americans officials. In defending Philippine policy and relations toward the Muslims, the Filipino elite subverted American political ideology and challenged American claims that the United States' primary purpose in the archipelago was to train Filipinos in democratic governance until they were ready to govern themselves.<sup>4</sup> They ultimately used the language of US democracy and colonialism to challenge and redefine the American colonial mission as well as to defend their actions toward their Muslim counterparts.

### ***Muslim resistance to Filipino encroachment***

Before discussing how Filipinos addressed Muslim resistance and American reservations with Filipino rule of Muslim areas, a brief overview of the ways in which Muslims responded to increasing Filipino involvement in their affairs is necessary. It should be recalled that the term Muslim is applied to the ethnic groups referred to as *Moro* in Spanish and American colonial records.<sup>5</sup> These groups included several

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<sup>4</sup> Chapter 3 focuses on the varied ways that Filipino politicians mimicked American colonial policy.

<sup>5</sup> In some American sources, the term "Mohammedan" is also used.

tribes in the southern regions of the archipelago, including the Tausug in Sulu, the Yakan in Basilan, and the Magindanao, Samals, and Maranao in Mindanao.

Although Spanish and American officials lumped together all of these groups under the term *Moro*, these tribal groups neither identified with this label nor thought of themselves as a unified religious entity until much later during the American colonial period.<sup>6</sup> In the case of certain Muslim groups, notably the Tausug in Sulu, relations with their northern counterparts involved piracy and raids of coastal towns where Christian Filipinos were generally unarmed and easily taken as slaves. Commerce among the different groups revolved more around trade connections with Singapore than Manila. The fact that Muslim *datus* felt little connection to the Christianized tribes of the north is also evidenced by the fact that they ignored pleas from revolutionary Christian Filipinos in the north for aid in their rebellion against the Spanish regime in the late 1800s.

Spanish penetration of the Muslim regions of Mindanao and Sulu was relatively superficial and became significant only toward the end of the 1800s, owing largely to the advent of steamships and other technological advances. Due to the trouble that the Spanish had in subduing the region, American legislators decided that the Muslim regions merited special colonial policies separate from the rest of the

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<sup>6</sup> In the early formation of the Philippine state, however, both Christian Filipinos and Americans made references to the *moros* of the islands, regardless of community affiliation. For this reason, these communities will be collectively referred to as Muslim. For more information about the formation of a collective Muslim identity among Philippine Muslims, see Thomas McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). McKenna's account seems far more plausible than the one offered by John D. Harbor, "Conflict and Compromise in the Southern Philippines: The Case of Moro Identity" (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 1998.), which dates their formation to during the late Spanish period.

archipelago. Political scientist Patricio Abinales writes that “not one but two distinct processes of colonial state formation occurred in the first decade of American rule.”<sup>7</sup> The Sulu archipelago and the Muslim regions of Mindanao became the Moro Province, placed under United States Army control until the advent of civil rule in 1913. Resistance was scattered and unity never emerged among the various Muslim tribal leaders, or *datus*.<sup>8</sup> There was thus never a unified response from a “Moro Mindanao.”

To further complicate attempts to understand the responses of the local populations in Mindanao, written testimonies from Philippine Muslims in the early 1900s are rare. Abinales contends, however, that “their constant appeals to make Moro Mindanao separate from the rest of the colony or to continue Army rule suggest their support for the Army’s position [that Moro Mindanao was unstable and prone to explode in rebellion if controlled by Filipinos].”<sup>9</sup> Literature from this time period corroborates this point of view; Professor David Barrows, former chief of the Bureau of Non-Christian tribes from 1901-1903, alluded to the “passionate statements of several Moro *datus* to Secretary Dickinson on his visit to Samboanga in 1910” that indicated that “this [American authority], rather than Filipino government, is their own preference.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Patricio N. Abinales, “Progressive-Machine Conflict in Early-Twentieth Century U.S. Politics and Colonial State building in the Philippines,” in *The American Colonial State: Global Perspectives*, ed. Julian Go and Anne L. Foster (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003), 148-181.

<sup>8</sup> Patricio Abinales, “American Military Presence in the Southern Philippines: A Comparative Historical Overview,” *East-West Center Working Papers: Politics and Security Series*, No.7, October 2004, 3.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>10</sup> David Prescott Barrows, *Decade of American Government in the Philippines, 1903-1913* (New York: Yonkers-on-Hudson World Book Company, 1914), 59.



Democratic control of the United States Congress and the Presidency, however, led to Filipinization of the colonial government, the establishment of civil rule in the newly named Department of Mindanao and Sulu and, eventually, the full integration of the Muslim regions into the legislative control of the Philippine Congress with the passage of the Jones Law in 1916. The law grouped non-Christians and Muslims in the 12<sup>th</sup> district of the archipelago, and section 124 stipulated that the “the territory to be comprised in the representative districts of the Mountain Province and Department of Mindanao and Sulu shall be determined by the Governor-General.”<sup>11</sup> No rationale is given for this modification, and the Jones Law stipulated earlier in the Act in Section 22 that members in the legislature from these areas were to be appointed. This section created a Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes, which was to have “general supervision over the public affairs of the inhabitants of the territory represented in the legislature by *appointive* senators and representatives” (emphasis added).<sup>12</sup> The inspiration for such a stipulation could have been many things, including a limited electorate (voters had to either own property or be able to read and write in Spanish, English, or a native language) and general distrust of the integrity of elections if held in the region. The result though was clear--while other districts enjoyed full suffrage, the Muslim and non-Christian legislators were appointed by the governor-general, in effect alienating Muslims and non-Christians from participating in the election process, thus giving them even more incentive to resist or challenge the new political regime.

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<sup>11</sup> United States Bureau of Insular Affairs, *Philippine Islands: Acts of Congress and Treaties Pertaining to the Philippine Islands in Force and Effect July 1, 1919* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1920), 155.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

Filipino control of the affairs of the Department of Mindanao and Sulu, and the state more generally, would soon be challenged by the return of the Republicans as the majority party in the United States Congress and the election of President Warren Harding in 1921. Harding sent former Governor-General Cameron Forbes and General Leonard Wood, former governor of the Moro Province, both American Republicans, on a mission to the colony to investigate the conditions of the islands after years of administration by American Democrat Governor-General Harrison. Regarding the Muslims, the mission reported that:

The Moros are a unit against independence and are united for continuance of American control and in case of separation of the Philippines from the United States, desire their portion of the islands to be retained as American territory under American control.<sup>13</sup>

Given American interests in the resource rich southern islands of the archipelago, one should be skeptical before accepting the report's validity.

The letters from Muslims to former Army officials, however, corroborated the words of the report, often referencing a wish for the return of the conditions that American military rule of the province had created before Filipino takeover after the Jones Law. One Muslim datu wrote the following to former provincial governor General Leonard Wood:

I, Arolas Tulawie, write you after this long while in remembrance of the days when you were stationed in Zamboanga and had frequent occasion to visit our troubled island in your official capacity as Department Commander and also as Governor. It is myself [sic] and many others of my people who wish those days or rather those conditions with us again. Not that we have not made any progress, but we believe that we should have made much more if we had been left under the wise guidance of Americans instead of Filipinos who do not have any idea of managing their own people. Since you have left Zamboanga, we

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<sup>13</sup> United States, *Report of the Special Mission on Investigation to the Philippine Islands to the Secretary of War* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1921), 21.

were under an American governor but this governor was governing the Moros merely for the pleasure of the politicians in Manila.<sup>14</sup>

His explicit criticism of Filipinos and their ignorance regarding management suggests that any progress that had been made in the province was entirely due to the efforts and due diligence of the Muslims themselves. The American governor ruling only for the pleasure of the Filipinos who he is referring to is none other than Democrat-appointed Frank Carpenter, a firm advocate of Filipinization.

An interview with Datu Piang of Dulawan in 1926 further conveys the distrust that many Muslims felt towards the Filipinos.<sup>15</sup> Datu Piang described the American Army officers who governed the Moro Province as “good men and just,” stating that “they gave us assurances that they would protect us and not turn us over to those whom we do not trust.” Any doubt that he is referring to Christian Filipinos is erased when he declared that “we trusted them [the Americans].... But year after year, slowly, they have given the Christian Filipinos more power over us.” Datu Piang criticized the Filipinos by stating that “their laws are too complicated for us; the Moros need a simple government. Our own is more simple [sic], our laws are laws that have been handed down from father to son for many centuries.” He then stated that “my sons have told me [about] one of the bills presented to Congress by Mr. Bacon of New York. They tell me that this is to separate Mindanao [and] Sulu from the rest of the Philippines. That would be better. Perhaps not the best solution but better than present conditions [sic]. Our hearts are heavy just now.” Comments like

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<sup>14</sup> Arolas Tulawie to Pershing, May 20, 1923, in BIA Records, File No. 5075-139A, as quoted in Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland*, 327-28.

<sup>15</sup> “Interview with Datu Piang of Dulawan, 1926,” Joseph Ralston Hayden Papers, University of Michigan, Box 28-24, as cited in Patricio Abinales and Donna Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines*, 145.

his are examples of the resistance among the Muslim elite to the power shift between American and Filipino officials. His testimony suggests that legislation in the United States that would separate Mindanao and Sulu from the rest of the Philippines found support in some Muslim communities.

### ***Dealing with Muslim Resistance and American Reservations***

Current literature elides the response of the Filipinos to American reservations that were sympathetic to the division of the colony due to concerns for the Muslim populace.<sup>16</sup> Understanding how elite politicians from the colonial majority responded to the challenges to their power that came from minority groups gives us a clearer picture of the relationships between Christian Filipinos and Muslims and the tensions involved in Philippine state formation during the early American colonial period. The ways in which elite Filipinos responded, defended, denied, and sidestepped Muslim resistance and American reservations concerning the Muslim groups evidence a subversion of American political ideology and a challenge to American claims that their primary purpose in the archipelago was a benevolent one: to train the Filipinos in democratic governance until they were ready to govern themselves. Written discourse regarding the Muslim tribes would become a site for Filipinos to frequently launch accusations against the United States government and its colonial intentions and ultimately challenge and redefine its colonial mission.

### ***Denial and Fictive Amity***

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<sup>16</sup> See Vicente L. Rafael, *White Love, and Other Events in Filipino History* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2000) 6, for one example. Rafael states that American colonial officials “chose to maintain this Spanish geography [referring to the islands of the archipelago] after some short-lived discussions of partitioning the colony.” The shape of the Philippine colony, however, was still debated even in the 1920s, and Filipino nationalists responded accordingly.

One of the most frequent responses among Philippine statesmen was to deny the charges that their Muslim “brethren” did not support a united Philippine polity. Manuel Quezon, as Philippine resident commissioner to the United States in 1914, often responded first to amendments calling for the separation of Mindanao by Republicans who were sympathetic to Muslim dissenters. Iowan Republican Representative Horace Mann Towner’s suggested one such bill in 1914.<sup>17</sup> Since Towner made such a proposal in part due to Muslim protests against Christian Filipino influence in their affairs, Quezon addressed these in his counterargument to Congress, explaining that:

It was, in truth, very difficult for an ordinary intelligence like my own to explain how uneducated people—some of them completely uncivilized—would be able to place their oratory qualities at the height of those of persons of superior education that have dedicated themselves especially to studying and practicing eloquence.<sup>18</sup>

His testimony throws doubt on the veracity of such petitions, capitalizing on the American and Filipino perception that Muslims were uneducated and uncivilized. Quezon underscored this fact because the petitions sent to Congress were all in English—since English fluency was limited among the Muslims, these petitions were often written in the native languages and then translated. Quezon framed the eloquence of these translations as proof that they could not have actually originated from Muslim writers.

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<sup>17</sup> The bill referred to here is the Jones Bill, which will be discussed in further detail later in the chapter.

<sup>18</sup> Manuel Luis Quezon, *Discursos Del Hon. Manuel L. Quezon, Comisionado Residente de Filipinas, pronunciados en la cámara de representantes de los Estados Unidos con motivo de la discusión del bill Jones....* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1913), ed. by William Atkinson Jones. Original reads: Era, en verdad, bastante difícil para una inteligencia ordinaria como la mía explicar cómo una gente ineducada—algunos de ellos de hecho completamente incivilizados—podía poner sus cualidades oratorias a la altura de las de personas de educación superior que se han dedicado especialmente a estudiar y practicar la elocuencia.

In fact, he stated that “I have asked myself many times if the hand that recorded those addresses wasn’t, in all those cases, a gloved hand, and if the translator—because they are translated in English so that that the person to whom they are directed can understand them—wasn’t really pronouncing an address he himself made.”<sup>19</sup>

He thus dismissed the content of the petitions by arguing that all they reflected were the opinions of the “glove”—the translators fluent in English. Christian Filipino Conrado Benitez, one of the deans of the University of the Philippines, wrote a response to the release of W. Cameron Forbes’s *The Philippine Islands* in 1931, which provides us with further elaboration of what Quezon meant.<sup>20</sup> He writes that some of the documents signed by Muslims that requested permanent annexation to the United States were highly questionable, and cites a critique made by Forbes of the document, stating that “it was obvious from a study of it that it was prepared by American and foreign residents in the Islands.... Many of the Moros signing it did so with their thumb marks, as they were unable to write and presumably unable to read, so that it is a matter of opinion as to whether or not they were correctly informed as to the contents of the paper.”<sup>21</sup> It seems like it would also be a matter of opinion that the Muslims did, in fact, stamp it since thumb marks are more easily forged than

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<sup>19</sup> Quezon, *Discursos*, 132. Original reads: *Me he preguntado muchas veces si la mano que redactó estos discursos era, en todos los casos, una mano enguantada, y si el traductor—porque se tradujeron al inglés para que los comprendiera la persona a quien iban dirigidas—estaba realmente pronunciando un discurso hecho por él mismo.* (132)

<sup>20</sup> Conrado Benitez, “A Filipino’s Point of View (Forbes’ *The Philippine Islands*),” *Journal of Political Economy* 39, no. 1 (Feb 1931): 86-100.

<sup>21</sup> W. Cameron Forbes, *The Philippine Islands* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), vol. II, 47, quoted in Benitez, “A Filipino’s Point of View,” 93.

signatures, especially without any reliable verification of the thumb marks of each Muslim signatory.

Manuel Quezon was not the only Filipino statesman to deny American claims that Muslims wished for a separate colony. Following the publication of the Wood-Forbes Report in 1921, Camilo Osias, as resident commissioner in the Philippines, wrote in 1924 that:

In their now famous, not to say infamous report, Wood and Forbes intimated that Mindanao and Sulu, that large and fertile territory inhabited by our brethren in the south, 'in case of separation of the Philippines from the United States,' should be 'retained as American territory under American control.' We oppose the false conclusion that may be drawn from this assertion that our Filipino brethren prefer American control to Filipino control or the control of themselves and their own countrymen. We are irrevocably opposed to any attempt at dismemberment of Philippine territory. We want the integrity of our country preserved at all costs. We do not want an independent Luzon and Visayan republic and an American controlled Southern Philippines. *We want a republic of the entire Philippines.* We received this country as a legacy from our forefathers. It must be our high resolve to keep and preserve it as one, compact, and united, under the inspiration of a historic past and a common destiny and transmit it from generation to generation in all its integrity.<sup>22</sup> [Emphasis his]

Osias's response clearly articulates the tension involved during this period regarding the possible separation of the Muslim south. His passion communicates itself clearly not only through his diction, but also the stylistic choice of emphasizing what he terms the desire of Filipinos. He deliberately chose not to refer to the inhabitants of Mindanao and Sulu by religion but instead labeled them "our brethren in the south." Such a move reveals his conception of the Philippine colony as akin to a family household in which all inhabitants are members related by blood, not just politics. He refers to imagined common forefathers that have gifted the country to Osias's

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<sup>22</sup> Quezon, Manuel Luis and Camilo Osias. *Governor-General Wood and the Filipino Cause* (Manila: Manila Book Company, 1924), 191.

generation. His references to a “historic past” and a common “destiny” are fruits of fiction as well—the history of the Muslim south differed in significant ways from the regions dominated by the Catholic Church and the eventual formation of the country was hardly destined. By “brethrenizing” the Muslims, he likens the desire to remain apart from the Philippine polity to the desire of querulous cousins wanting to separate from their family.

In denying claims that there were Muslim groups against independence, Filipino statesmen implicitly conveyed that relations with the Muslims were good. They also did so explicitly by referencing “authentic documents” proving this amity that never seem to have been proffered. In fact, promoting the idea that relations were good was another important response among the Philippine political elite.

Consider a statement by Manuel Quezon’s successor to the position of Resident Commissioner from the Philippines, Pedro Guevara. In May of 1927, in a publication entitled *Are Filipinos Ready for Independence?*, Guevara states that:

During the administration of Governor General Harrison, a most friendly and brotherly relationship existed between Mohammedans and Christians in the Islands, and nothing has occurred since that time to cause any change in this feeling. In proof of my assertion to this effect, I am prepared to produce at any time authentic documents signed by prominent Mohammedans in the Islands which I have in my possession.<sup>23</sup>

These “authentic documents” are never actually proffered nor cited. Guevara’s statement here runs contrary to the sentiments expressed in 1926 by Datu Piang that the separation of Mindanao and Sulu from the rest of the Philippines would be better

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<sup>23</sup> Pedro Guevara, “The Philippine Problem,” in *Are the Filipinos ready for Independence?* (Philadelphia: American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1927), ed. Clyde L King et al., American Academy of Political and Social Science, 11.



than having these regions controlled by Filipinos.<sup>24</sup> While the opinion of the majority of Muslims during this time period remains elusive, it is clear that there was opposition to Filipino takeover from the Muslim elite threatened by the shift in power from American hands to those of the Filipinos.

### ***Racial Similarity, Civilizational Inferiority***

Pedro Guevara provides us with further insight regarding the Philippine elite's response to reservations among Americans concerning Filipino control of Mindanao. He states that "much has been said of the antagonism which it is assumed exists between the Filipinos of Mohammedan and Christian beliefs. It has even been stated that those adhering to these differing religious faiths do not belong to the same race, although this is in direct contradiction to the statements of noted historians both past and present."<sup>25</sup> Once again, references to specific historians are absent, but his response is valuable in that he defends the idea that the territorial integrity of the country should be maintained because despite religious differences, Muslims and Christians remain the same race.

Ethnographic maps of the archipelago drawn towards the end of Spanish rule by Jesuit missionaries, however, do show racial differences among the various peoples of the archipelago, classifying the majority of the population as Malay, Indonesian, or Aeta.<sup>26</sup> Such distinctions, however, seem largely lost on high profile Americans that visited the archipelago. Their comments proved to be valuable references for Christian Filipino Jose P. Melencio, director of the United States Philippine Press

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<sup>24</sup> "Interview with Datu Piang of Dulawan, 1926," Joseph Ralston Hayden Papers, University of Michigan, Box 28-24, as cited in Abinales and Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines*, 145.

<sup>25</sup> Pedro Guevara, "The Philippine Problem," in *Are the Filipinos ready for Independence?*, 11.

<sup>26</sup> Please see appendix for a map and these distinctions.

Bureau, who, similar to Pedro Guevara, also commented on the racial homogeneity of the peoples found on the more than 7,000 islands of the archipelago. In his *Arguments against Philippine Independence and Their Answers*, he wrote that one of the principal sources of opposition stemmed from idea that “the Filipinos are a heterogeneous conglomeration of tribal groups, hopelessly differing from one another not only in language but also in customs and aspirations; and that, if given independence, they will be ‘cutting each other’s throats.’”<sup>27</sup>

His counterargument tries to establish that the Filipinos are not a conglomeration of tribal groups but rather a “homogenous people” by drawing on the observations of prominent Americans, such as former Governor General Taft. He quotes Taft as saying that:

the word ‘tribe’ gives an erroneous impression. There is no tribal relation among them. There is a radical solidarity among the Filipino people, undoubtedly. They are homogenous. I cannot tell the difference between an Ilocano and a Tagalog, or a Visayan. The Ilocanos, it would seem to me, have something of an admixture of the Japanese blood; the Tagalogs have rather more of the Chinese; and it seems to me that the Visayans had still more. But to me all the Filipinos were alike.<sup>28</sup>

The inclusion of Taft’s unsophisticated commentary indicates that the audience of Melencio’s publication is most likely American. Melencio’s use of Taft’s unnuanced, racially tinged, objectifying observation to further a political agenda directed at protecting the Philippines’ territorial integrity is clever as the majority of his audience had most likely never visited the islands. Also, for an American to contradict Melencio, in essence, would amount to contradicting Taft himself.

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<sup>27</sup> Jose P. Melencio, *Arguments against Philippine Independence and their Answers* (DC: Philippine Press Bureau, 1919), 15.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

While Filipinos argued on the one hand that they were racially tied to the Muslim tribes in the South (as well as other indigenous groups in what became known as the Mountain Province of Luzon), so too did they highlight the civilizational inferiority among the different tribes. Melencio, for instance, states explicitly that:

it is not true that the Filipino people are savages. Neither is it true that they are semi-savages. It is admitted that there are about 500,000 non-Christian peoples in the archipelago, who used to be in a stage of savagery, dressed in scanty garments, indulging in head-hunting at times, and dwelling in the mountains with only the bow and arrow as their venerable companions. But the days of head-hunting are gone. The mountain tribes as well as the Moros of Mindanao are fast being won over to the ways of civilization and of Americanism. Schools, hospitals and religious centers have been instituted among them. *Many of them have been Christianized.* They actually enter into trade transactions with the rest of the natives. [Emphasis added]

According to Melencio, civilization and Americanism go hand in hand. The measures of progress among the minority tribes are not only schools, hospitals, and religious centers, but also conversion to Christianity.<sup>29</sup> Their participation with the rest of the natives is also highlighted—perhaps Melencio believed in a cultural osmosis whereby through contact alone the civilization of the Christianized natives would permeate the savage membrane of the minority groups. What is clear from his testimony is that he felt that this evidence merited inclusion in a book promoting Philippine independence and would thus prove compelling to the American audience for which it was intended.

### ***Blame Uncle Sam***

Elite Filipinos not only articulated that Christian Filipinos were higher on the scale of civilization than their Muslim counterparts, but also defined the Muslim tribes

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<sup>29</sup>Jose P. Melencio, *Arguments against Philippine Independence and their Answers* (DC: Philippine Press Bureau, 1919), 10.

of the South and highlighted their “base” instincts that lurked beneath the surface.<sup>30</sup>

Americans were blamed for awakening these instincts that purportedly existed among Muslims as well as inciting resistance to incorporation into the larger Philippine polity. Vicente G. Bunuan, the Director of the Philippine Press Bureau located in the Washington office of the Philippine Commission of Independence, stated that “it is true that among the Moros, as a result of organized effort of American residents in the Islands who advocate permanent annexation, there are isolated utterances against independence.”<sup>31</sup>

He goes on further to elaborate how American actions have created this reaction among the Muslim populace. He states that:

our opponents have been constantly ringing into the ears of the Moros their being fearless, valiant, and brave; their never having been conquered by the Filipinos of the North; their being their traditional enemies; and their being promised protection by the United States against the Filipinos. You can well imagine the psychological effect of this upon the mind of the picturesque, therefore highly imaginative, Moro. His dormant instincts to resist, to hate, to kill are aroused and so today, with the exception of the large group of Moros that have stood through thick and thin with the Filipinos in their stand on the independence question, animosity instead of amity, friction instead of friendship, alienation instead of attraction, govern the relations between Mohammedans and Filipinos.<sup>32</sup>

Bunuan’s rationale for the motives behind the desire of Americans to incite such resistance is largely economic. He highlights the fact that the process began when “Mindanao became a tempting rubber prize.”<sup>33</sup> By pointing to the natural resources of the island and labeling them a prize to be won, Bunuan criticizes American colonial

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<sup>30</sup> This is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2

<sup>31</sup> Vicente G. Bunuan, *Arguments for Immediate Philippine Independence (Supported by facts and figures)* (Washington D.C.: Philippine Press Bureau, 1924), 13.

<sup>32</sup> Vicente G. Bunuan, “Democracy in the Philippines,” in *Are the Filipinos ready for Independence*, 27.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

intentions as a cover up for an imperial hunger for resources. For this argument to have any moral force, he takes for granted that his audience will recognize his implicit stance that the rubber of Mindanao belongs rightfully to the Christian Filipino people and not just to Mindanao's historic occupants. As we have seen, however, a large contingent of Mindanao did not consider itself an integral part of the Filipino polity (as many still do not in the present time) and resisted the inclusion of its resources as national property.

### ***Subverting American Political Ideology***

In addition to placing blame on the United States Administration for the resistance in the Muslim areas, elite Filipinos at the same time used American principles of democracy to dismiss or belittle Muslim complaints. Vicente G. Bunuan, for example, argued that the opinions of Muslims in favor of continued American presence in the archipelago was insignificant compared to the views held by the majority of Filipinos. He wrote that "even granting for the sake of argument that the Moros are for continuance of American control it must not be forgotten that the Moro population constitute only four per cent of the Filipino people. Certainly in this great Republic [the United States] where the desire of the majority is the ruling factor in the determination of any question, the wish of the 96 percent of the total 11,500,000 Filipinos should not be subordinated to the wish of a few."<sup>34</sup> He subverts colonial ideology by highlighting majority rule and ignores American principles of self-determination that might similarly be used to argue that the Muslim populations

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<sup>34</sup> Vicente G. Bunuan, *Arguments for Immediate Philippine Independence (Supported by Facts and Figures)* (Washington, DC: Philippine Press Bureau, 1924), 13.

deserved their own representative government distinct from that of the Christian Filipino tribes.

Jose Melencio similarly draws on American political principles regarding representation as proof of fair treatment of Muslims. He states that “the non-Christian peoples of the Philippines have always been accorded just treatment by the Christian population. Now they have representatives in each of the Houses of the Philippine Legislature. There is a Moro Senator, two Moro representatives, and one Igorot. The Mohammedan religion is respected by the rest of the archipelago, resulting in a closer relation between the Moros of Mindanao and the Christians of Luzon and the Visayas.”<sup>35</sup> Quezon fails to mention, however, that many of these positions were appointed by the Governor-General rather than elected by the Muslims and non-Christians that they were given authority to represent.

Just as Quezon references American ideology to defend Filipino treatment of Muslims and non-Christians, so too does Jose Melencio draw on American history to justify their dismissal as well. He states that

...it is prophesied that if independence is granted, ‘the people will quarrel, there will be rival factions, and neither will have the mental balance to accept results that are adverse.’ So be it. But we answer: Was not America’s civil war the great disruption that promptly solidified her national structure, until today she is the mightiest commonwealth on the face of the globe?<sup>36</sup>

By highlighting tumultuous events in the American past, he defends the right of the Philippines to go through its own trials in order to reach a more storied future. In such a narrative, he argues that although the southern Muslim tribes and Christians may be

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<sup>35</sup> José P. Melencio, *Arguments against Philippine Independence and their Answers* (Washington, DC: Philippine Press Bureau, 1919), 11.

<sup>36</sup> Jose P. Melencio, *Arguments against Philippine Independence and their Answers* (DC: Philippine Press Bureau, 1919, 17.

rival factions, they are ultimately part of an eventual solidified national structure. He also equates the uncompromising southern American politicians to the Muslim minority of the archipelago to dismiss the idea that the country's independence should be refused.

Excerpts from the works of Bunuan, Quezon, and Melencio evidence that Filipino politicians were becoming increasingly fluent in the idiom of American democracy and political ideology. They mobilized experiences from American history, such as the Civil War, and Democratic principles like majority rule and political representation to support Filipino independence and to dismiss the complaints and grievances of the Muslim peoples in the southern islands of the archipelago. Subverting historical experiences of their colonial metropole and its ideology in such a way mocked the official discourse of the American colonial administration and their supposedly noble, limited intentions of preparing Filipinos for the independence of the islands.

The elite were also quick to frame American intentions regarding the education of the Filipinos in democracy as driven by capitalist motives and profit. Bunuan explicitly declares that:

Opponents of independence refer to the Moros as elements which the Filipinos would be unable to handle once the Philippines are independent. This argument has gained momentum since Mindanao became known as the richest spot on earth for the growing of rubber, simultaneous with which discovery a movement was started looking toward the segregation of that region from the rest of the Archipelago.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Vicente G. Bunuan, "Democracy in the Philippines," in *Are the Filipinos ready for Independence*, 27.

Bunuan uses Muslim opposition to Philippine independence in order to highlight the economic potential of Mindanao towards supplying America's increasing demand for rubber.

American descriptions of the region highlight its economic importance. One publication from the Zamboanga Chamber of Commerce, titled *The Moro Province: Philippine Islands; and a Few of its Resources*, describes Mindanao as “the second largest island in the Philippines, and probably the richest in natural advantages. It is called ‘a white man’s country,’ meaning that the climate is especially salubrious for people who have been accustomed to reside in temperate zones.”<sup>38</sup> It goes on to describe the rubber industry, which began with American colonization in 1905, as “no longer an experiment, but a thoroughly proven success.”<sup>39</sup> It continues by declaring that the Moro Province’s soil is “not surpassed by any rubber growing district in the world.”<sup>40</sup>

P.J. Wester’s *Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago: Their Natural Resources and Opportunities for Development*, published by the Philippine Bureau of Agriculture, writes that gold has been found in all the rivers of the province of Agusan, describes the “enormous latent wealth” in Bukidnon, and discusses the vast commercial forests and potential for oil in Cotabato—all provinces in Mindanao with

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<sup>38</sup> Zamboanga Chamber of Commerce, *Moro Province: Philippine Islands, and a Few of its Resources* (Zamboanga: Chamber of Commerce, 1912), 5.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*



majority Muslim and non-Christian populations.<sup>41</sup> He goes on to describe each province in detail and its potential for commercial development.

Despite these descriptions, however, Bunuan is ultimately incorrect in dating the movement to segregate the island region from the rest of the archipelago to the discovery of its economic potential. After all, suggestions that Mindanao be administered separately from the rest of the colony predated the American regime. While economic motives were probably powerful incentives for the American politicians that wanted to retain the archipelago, Bunuan's charge also reveals his own sense of Christian Filipino entitlement to these same resources rather than an advocacy for the concerns of native Muslim inhabitants. Bunuan's statement seems to reveal not only the ulterior motives of Americans, but possibly Filipinos as well regarding the region's resources.

He was not the only Christian Filipino to point to American ulterior motives in the archipelago. Attorney Marcial P. Lichuaco contributed an article titled "The Conquest of the Philippines by the United States," to the American Academy of Social and Political Science publication *Are the Filipinos Ready for Independence* in 1927, writing frankly regarding the fact the United States had ulterior motives in their Asian colony. His work is addressed to Americans and the American colonial regime. He states, "I suggest that you admit to the Filipinos the interests which you have in maintaining some form of control or authority in those Islands. We Filipinos are also a practical people and, recognizing your interest and the relations which have bound

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<sup>41</sup> See Wester, *Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago: Their Natural Resources and Opportunities for Development* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1928), 25, 33, 49. Also look at the extensive collection of photographs featuring the "vast" commercial forests, pristine rivers, and open fields.

us together for so many years, we will, I feel sure, make some concessions compatible to your needs and to our present demands.”<sup>42</sup> Lichuaco’s words convey the struggle of elite Filipinos to find ways to achieve their independence. The frustration they experienced in attempting to determine what it would take to achieve their goals is evident in the way Lichuaco concludes, venting that that “the demands of the Filipinos have already been made known to you in every conceivable form and manner as complete, absolute, and immediate independence. Those are our aspirations, those are our aims, and those are our interests as we see them. It is for you to tell us yours, and to lay your cards down on the table—face up—as we have already done.”<sup>43</sup> Lichuaco’s principled statement proves that many of the Filipino elite saw benefit in being free from American interference and independent, and denied the official stance of the U.S. as articulated by the Jones Law, which stated that the United States would withdraw sovereignty when a stable government in the islands was established.<sup>44</sup> He thus challenged the American administration to reveal what they were truly after.

Certain members of the elite accepted American imperial motives and saw benefit in the resources of Mindanao, even so far as using them as bargaining chips for independence. Consider the testimony by Felipe Mabilangan, a student at the School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at the University of Syracuse and future Filipino diplomat, to the Senate Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs in 1930. The

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<sup>42</sup> Marcial P. Lichuaco, “The Demands of the Filipinos—Is the United States Meeting Them?,” in *Are the Filipinos Ready for Independence* (Philadelphia: American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1927), 33.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> United States Bureau of Insular Affairs, *Philippine Islands: Acts of Congress and Treaties Pertaining to the Philippine Islands in Force and Effect July 1, 1919* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1920), 33.

chairman asks Felipe if he favors the granting of any special privileges to the United States given its service in the Philippine archipelago. Mabilangan answers “well, for the United States Government the privilege of the exploitation of natural resources, our natural resources in Mindanao.”

The chairman responds, perplexed, “just what do you mean by granting the United States Government special privileges in Mindanao?”

Mr. Mabilangan replies “something like agreements between the two countries, the independent government and the United States, in the exploitation of economic natural resources for the benefit of both peoples.”

The chairman protests, stating “but our government never has followed the practice of going into the exploitation of any lands in foreign countries. Do you mean the granting of concessions to American corporations?”

Mabilangan responds by saying “yes, possibly; if it would be for the benefit of both peoples; that is, to develop these backward regions in Mindanao for the benefit of both peoples.”<sup>45</sup>

The development of the “backward regions” suggests that they were not only talking about Mindanao’s valuable resources, but also ways in which to get the local (largely Muslim) populations to cooperate. What is in the best interests of the Muslims, however, is noticeably absent in Mabilangan’s suggestion. As for the chairman and what he says regarding the United States’ selfless practices and refusal to exploit foreign lands, one would like to hear how he would defend the Bell Trade

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<sup>45</sup> Senate Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs, *Independence for the Philippine Islands, Hearings before the Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs*, 71<sup>st</sup> Cong., 2<sup>d</sup> sess., 1930, 315.

Act of 1946, signed into law on July 4 (the same day of Philippine Independence), which established clearly exploitative measures that would greatly handicap the archipelago's economic growth.<sup>46</sup> These included eight years of free trade between the countries (limiting the Philippines' ability to establish homegrown industries that could compete with far more numerous, cheap American products), the imposition of absolute quotas on Philippine imports to the U.S. (although none on U.S. exports to the Philippines), the necessity to get the United States' president's approval to alter the exchange rate of the Philippine peso or to levy export taxes, and the so-called "parity" clause, which granted American citizens and corporations the same rights as Filipinos to use and own natural resources and operate public utilities. During the American colonial period, ownership of natural resources was limited by the Philippine Constitution of 1935 to companies that were at least sixty percent Filipino-owned. The chairman's words ring hollow as American interests in the resources of the archipelago were preserved (even enhanced) despite Philippine independence in 1946.<sup>47</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

By focusing on the various ways that the Philippine elite responded to Muslim resistance and American reservations with Filipino rule, I argue that Filipinos not only mimicked colonial methods as seen in Chapter 3—but also mocked them. They

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<sup>46</sup> See M. Cuaderno, "The Bell Trade Act and the Philippine Economy," *Pacific Affairs* 25 (December 1952): 323-333 for one Filipino critique of the act published recently after the Act's passage in 1946. For fuller coverage, see Steven R. Shalom, "Philippine Acceptance of the Bell Trade Act of 1946: A Study of Manipulatory Democracy," *Pacific Historical Review* 49 (August 1980): 499-517.

<sup>47</sup> See Shalom, "Philippine Acceptance."

subverted American ideology to defend their rights to independence and used Mindanao and the Muslim populace to question the United States' true motives.

This can be seen in the speeches and published works of Manuel Quezon, Philippine resident commissioner to the United States, who defended Filipino management of Muslim affairs by casting doubt on supposed Muslim opposition expressed through documents written in English, and oftentimes signed by Muslim thumbprint. Quezon suggested that these documents were a more accurate reflection of the wishes of the American translators. In 1921, following the publication of the Wood-Forbes report, which stated again that Muslims preferred continuation of American rule, Camilo Osias similarly argued that this was a false conclusion arrived at by Americans with a vested interest in increasing American colonial control.

Vicente Bunuan even pointed to the United States as the responsible party for inciting resistance among the Muslims, motivated by an imperial hunger for resources. He argues that Americans wanted to separate the region from the rest of the Philippines when "Mindanao became a tempting rubber prize."<sup>48</sup>

The Christian Philippine elite also referenced the notion that they had a common racial stock in common with Muslims, capitalizing on western views of race and Americans statements like those of Governor-General Taft that Filipinos were homogenous and all looked alike. Manuel Quezon even pointed out that America's racially distinct Native Americans were essentially under the control of the United States Congress. He then argued that there could be no solid ground for Americans to deprive the Philippine legislature of power over their own Muslim minority when

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<sup>48</sup> Vicente G. Bunuan, "Democracy in the Philippines," in *Are the Filipinos ready for Independence*, 28.

Christian Filipinos and Muslims were considerably more racially similar than Americans with European heritage and their Native American minorities.<sup>49</sup>

Publications and speeches by members of the Christian Filipino elite, evidenced by Bunuan, Quezon, and Melencio, demonstrate their increasing fluency in the idiom of American colonial ideology and history, allowing them to subvert the historical experiences of the metropole in order to mock the “democratic training” of American colonial officials as well as their intentions in the islands. Bunuan referenced majority rule to dismiss the wishes of the insignificant Muslim minority. Quezon argued that Filipino fairness and democratic capability could be seen through the inclusion of a Moro Senator and representatives in the government, despite the fact that they were appointed and not elected like Christian representatives and senators. Melencio dismissed the concerns of American critics regarding the archipelago’s future as a single state given rival factions by citing the American experience of the Civil War as proof of national structure could be solidified by such divisions.

The testimony of Syracuse University educated, future prominent Philippine foreign service diplomat Felipe Mabilangan during the hearings of the United States Senate Committee of Territories and Insular Affairs provides particular insight. He explicitly references the resources of Mindanao as a bargaining chip for independence. By suggesting that the region could be used as a reward for America’s service in the archipelago as long as the development of the region would be for the benefit of both peoples, he shows us the importance of the area to the nation-state and the political cache that the region held for the elite. Far from being peripheral to nation-state

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<sup>49</sup>Quezon, *Discursos*, 130-131.

development, the Muslim regions and peoples of the archipelago were central to the Christian Filipino elite's quest for Philippine autonomy and independence. Indeed, they would even become a site of resistance and challenge to the American state and American colonial ideology.

## CHAPTER 5

### LESSONS LEARNED

This study has explored the historical development of the relationships between elite Filipino Christians and their Muslim counterparts by essentially evaluating elite, Christian Filipino responses in the early 1900s to the perceived threat of losing the predominantly Muslim regions of the archipelago, regions which they already viewed as belonging to a Filipino nation. I argue that Filipinos responded to this possible division by highlighting racial similarities between themselves and their Muslim counterparts while at the same time asserting civilizational superiority. After all, Christian Filipinos did not just want to keep the imagined borders of the nation in tact—they wanted to do so in a way in which they were in control of a greater amount of territory. Their responses prove that Muslims played a critical role in helping Filipino political leaders define a national Filipino character and fortify their power even at the very inception of American colonial rule in the archipelago.

I then contend that with the Filipinization of the archipelago's governance, the encouragement of the American Democratic administration, the passage of the Jones Bill in 1916, and the outbreak of World War I, Filipino politicians became the dominant players in Philippine Affairs. Despite being “colonized” themselves, they were put in power over minority groups in the archipelago considered less civilized than themselves and whose resources they coveted. The ways they formulated policy and the claims they made to progress were colonial in character and American in appearance.



Philippine Commission member Vicente Ilustre's Bill in 1914 extended the general laws of the rest of the archipelago over the Muslim regions, creating a secular justice system that more closely resembled that of the United States. In addition to changes in governance, Filipinos tried to prove their capacity for autonomy by showing that similar to what Americans claimed to have done before them, they too could claim to educate other peoples, investigating and discovering their talents in order to develop them. They took charge of improving public health in the Muslim and non-Christian provinces by building the institutions of "modern" medicine, including hospitals and dispensaries; acceptance of Western medicine delivered via Filipino hands was vouched for by the fact that women of the "best" families went to receive treatment. Filipinos invested in constructing public works characteristic of "civilized" countries, such as the establishment of telephone lines and potable water. They also posited that they could develop and increase the agricultural output of Mindanao and, in a clear display of colonialism, encouraged the migration of Christian Filipinos to Muslim areas of Mindanao, which they defended as a mechanism for bringing Christians and Muslims together and abolishing the differences between them.

Vicente Rafael writes that:

The allegory of benevolent assimilation thus foresaw the possibility, if not the inevitability, of colonialism's end. But equally important, it also insisted on defining and delimiting the means to that end. While colonial rule may be a transitional stage of self-rule, the self that rules itself can only emerge by way of an intimate relationship with a colonial master who sets the standards and practices of discipline to mold the conduct of the colonial subject. In other

words, the culmination of colonial rule, self-government, can be achieved only when the subject has learned to colonize itself.<sup>1</sup>

Democratic control of the United States Congress and Presidency afforded Filipino politicians unprecedented opportunities in formulating policy and developing the regions of the Muslim South in a colonial fashion. The progress that they made was touted as proof of their capacity to be autonomous. In the words of prominent Filipinos like Camilo Osias, former director of education, “it remained for the period when the Filipino people and Filipino officials had better control of their own affairs and of the non-Christian people to achieve the greatest work of uplift and of progress ever accomplished in the non-Christian territory and for the non-Christian people of the Philippines.”<sup>2</sup> Osias continued, stating that “one of the great achievements of the Filipinos in the last few years is found in the great work of uplift and nationalization of our Non-Christian brethren.”<sup>3</sup> Although colonized, the Filipino elite occupied positions of authority over the Muslim regions. They were, in effect, trying to prove that they were capable of governing themselves and establishing a stable government by modeling the methods of rule used by their colonial masters.

However, as noted by theorists such as Homi Bhabha and others, such mimicry was also menacing to the American colonial regime. Anderson Warwick writes that:

a critical awareness of mimicry, of the uncanny sense of the copy, could also challenge the boundaries of citizenship in the colony. Supposedly mimetic performance might serve, at this deeper level, to reveal the artificiality, the play, of conventional distinctions between native and other, to illuminate and make strange the “cultured self” of colonized and colonialist—in the case of

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<sup>1</sup> Vicente Rafael, *White Love, and Other Events in Filipino History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 22.

<sup>2</sup> Camilo Osias, *Governor-General Wood and the Filipino Cause* (Manila: Manila Book Company, 1924), 43.

<sup>3</sup> Osias, *Governor-General Wood*, 82-83.

the latter, to disturb a narcissistic overvaluation of his own mental processes, to eat away at his sense of authenticity and control.<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, Americans seemed to have hardly accepted Christian Filipino imitation, and instead viewed their attempts as unfaithful. Major Frank S. Bourns, an army surgeon and chief who would become the chief of the Bureau of Health, also dismissed the calculated nature by which Filipinos sought to model the United States in order to show their own capabilities, and instead attributed it to a *racial characteristic*:

the race is quick to learn and has a fairly good natural ability, but such a class will have to be educated before great responsibility can be placed in its hands....My idea [is that] if [Filipinos were] associated with...a sufficient number of Americans who are honorable and upright in their dealings, there would be a very strong tendency on their part to do as their colleagues do. They are natural imitators; it is a racial characteristic.<sup>5</sup>

In fact, the Filipino penchant for mimicry was a commonly cited character trait that suggested their semicivilized state.<sup>6</sup>

If Filipino colonial mimicry was menacing to the American regime, then certainly Filipino mockery must have been more so. By analyzing discourse related to independence made by important political figures of the era, namely Manuel Quezon, Camilo Osias, Vicente Bunuan, and Jose Melencio, one sees that the American imperial mission provided the elite with a new political idiom—that of American government principles such as representation and majority rule that were used to sidestep Muslim reservations and resistance that were cited by American officials. Filipino officials even referenced the outsider status and racial differences of Native

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<sup>4</sup> Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 206.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of the Philippine Islands, 1903* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1905), vol 1, 505, in Rafael, *White Love*, 34.

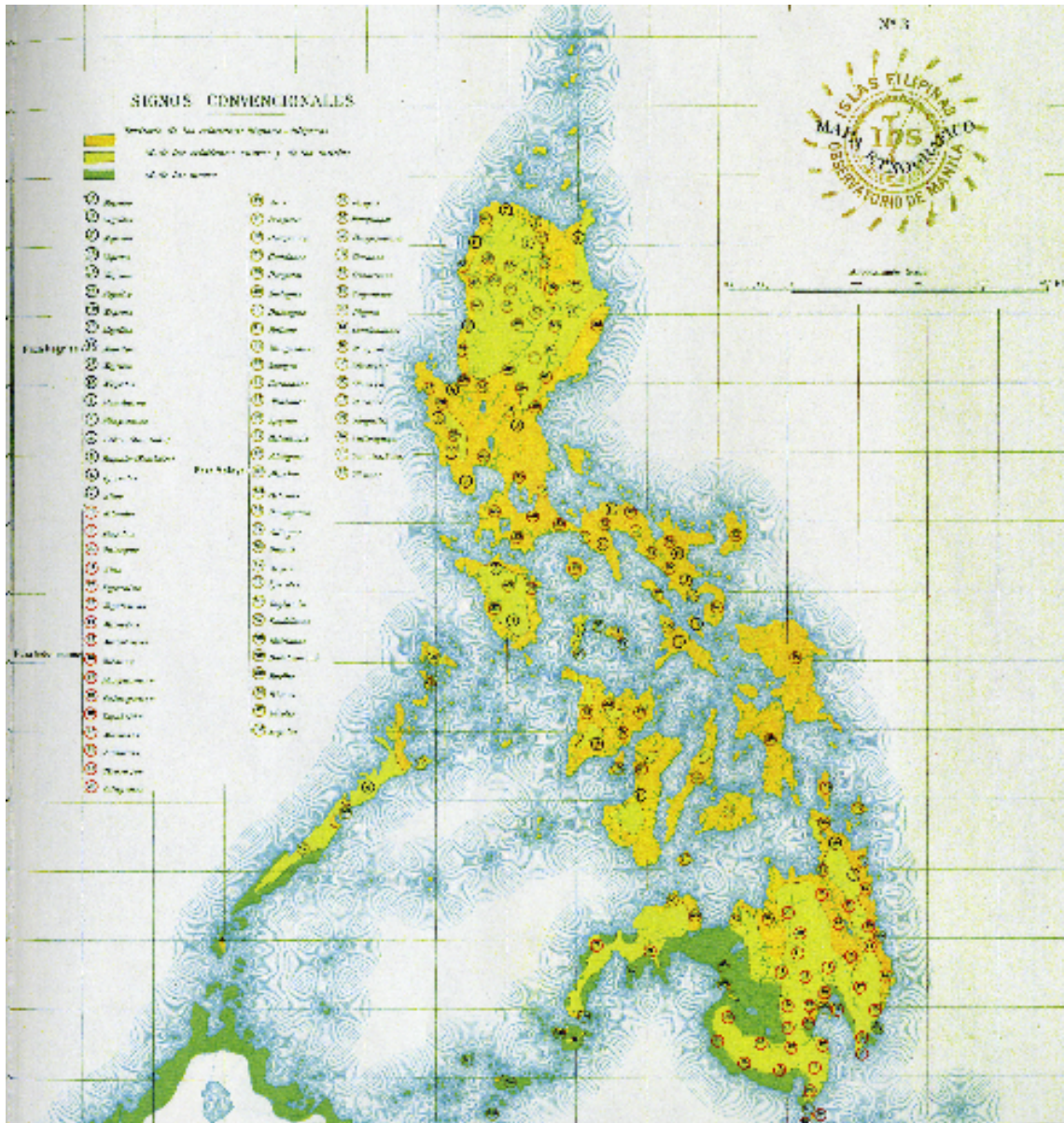
<sup>6</sup> See Rafael, *White Love*, 34.

Americans in the United States to defend the legitimacy of their control over the Muslim regions. In defending Philippine policy and relations toward the Muslims, the Filipino elite ultimately subverted American political ideology, demonstrating a grasp of principles of American government and using them to challenge and redefine the American colonial mission.

By assessing elite Christian Filipino responses to the possibility that Muslim regions of the Philippines could have been separated from the rest of the archipelago by the American government in the early 1900s, we gain a window into the nascent relationship between the Christian Filipinos and the Muslim-dominated regions of Mindanao and Sulu as well as the strategies used by Filipinos to both comply with and rebel against the specious American doctrine of “benevolent assimilation” and governing the Filipinos until they were ready to govern themselves. Ultimately, looking at this relationship demonstrates that Americans, along with other western powers, did not have any particular license to the ideology and imperial language they used to defend their colonial actions. Elite Christian Filipinos learned to speak in the same idiom to defend their establishment of a stable government, their control over “the wild peoples” (Muslims and other non-Christians), and the placing of the “white man’s burden” on brown shoulders.

## APPENDIX

### 1) Mapa de las razas de Filipinas, 1899 (Racial Map of the Philippines)<sup>7</sup>



<sup>7</sup> U.S. Treasury Department, U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, *Atlas of the Philippine Islands* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1900). Although published by the United States government, the maps in this atlas are the fruit of the Jesuit Observatory under the supervision of director Rev. José Algue, who agreed to cooperate with the United States Government to publish the series. The Muslim regions are highlighted in darker green while the lighter green denotes the non-Christian tribes and the “newly converted” Christians. The yellow regions denote the territory of the “Hispanic Christian Filipinos” (in the language of the atlas). The key follows on the next page.



## 2) Categorías de las Razas Racial Categories<sup>8</sup>



<sup>8</sup> U.S. Treasury Department, U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, *Atlas of the Philippine Islands* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1900).

### 3) The administrative organization of the Moro Province, 1900-1913<sup>9</sup>

Insular Government  
(Governor General and the Philippine Commission)

Moro Province  
(Governor and Legislative Council)

Districts  
(District Governors—District Board)

Davao	Cotabato	Lanao	Sulu	Zamboanga
5 organized municipalities: Davao Mati Cateel Baganga Caraga	2 organized municipalities: Cotabato Makar	2 organized municipalities: Malabang Iligan	3 Organized Municipalities: Jolo Siasi Cagayan de Sulu	2 Organized Municipalities: Zamboanga Dapitan
6 Tribal Wards	18 Tribal Wards	13 Tribal Wards	9 Tribal Wards	5 Tribal Wards

<sup>9</sup> For original chart, see Peter Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland: The American Government of Muslim Filipinos, 1899-1920* (Quezon City: Philippine Center for Advanced Studies, University of the Philippines System Press, 1977), 116.

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